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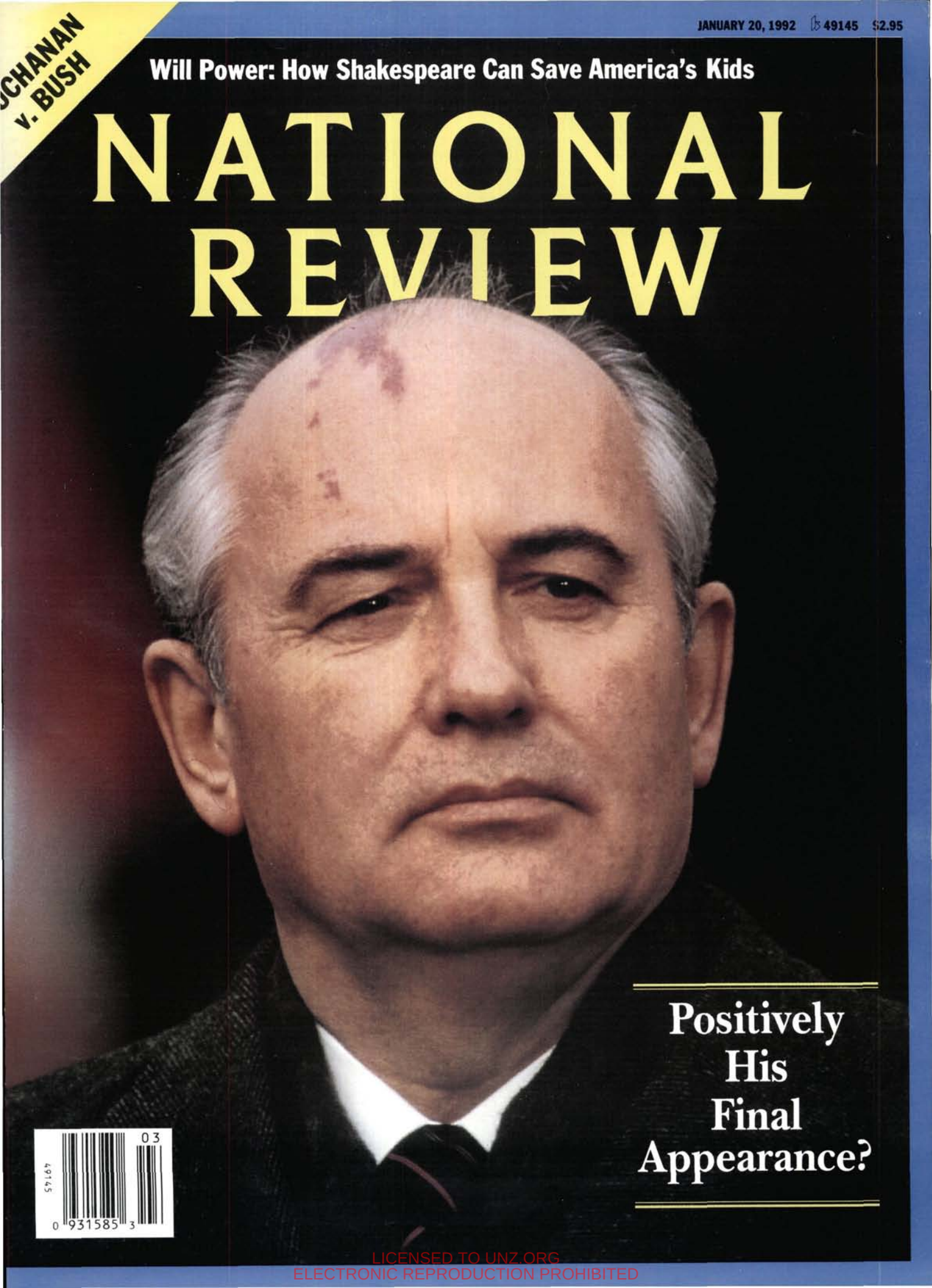
NATIONAL REVIEW



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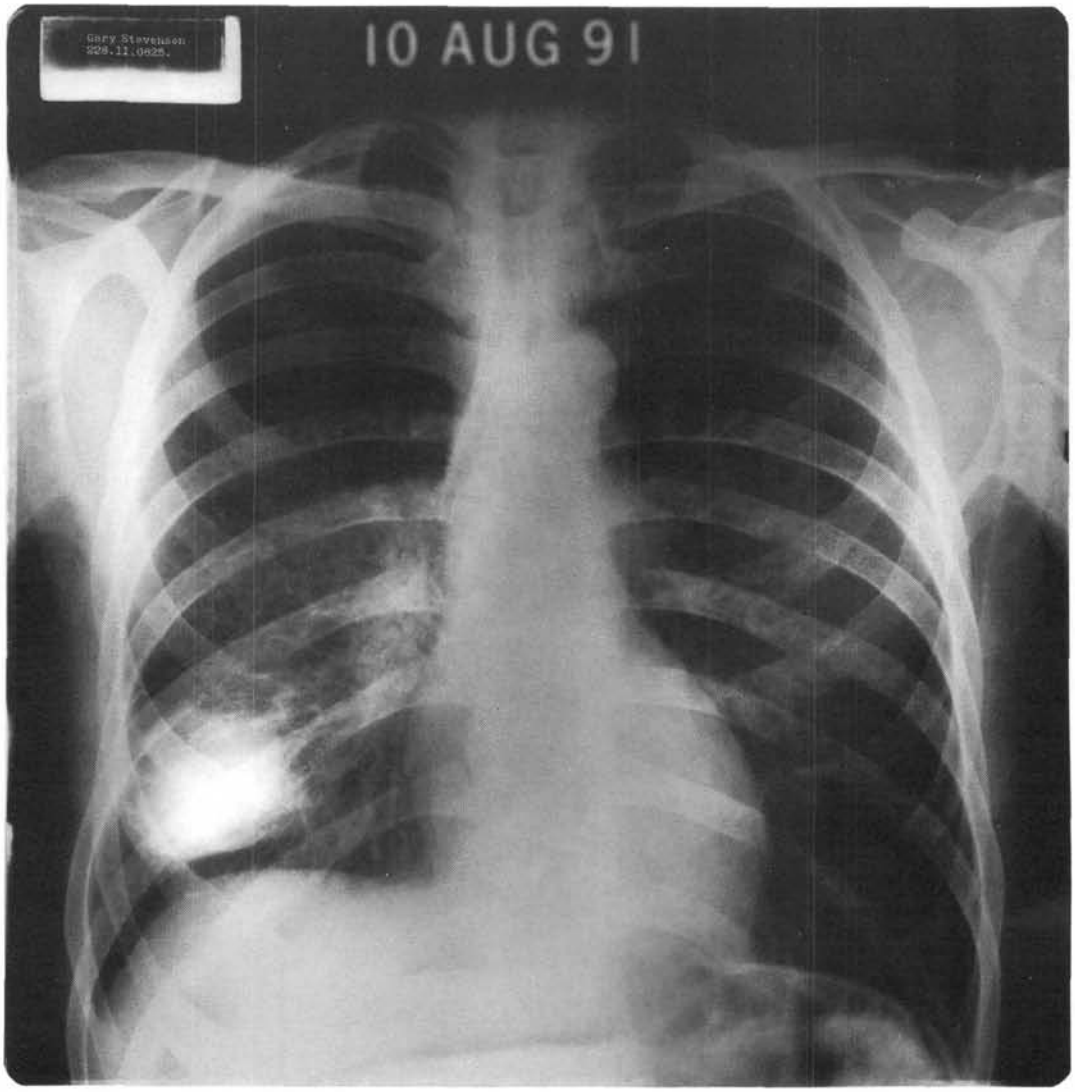

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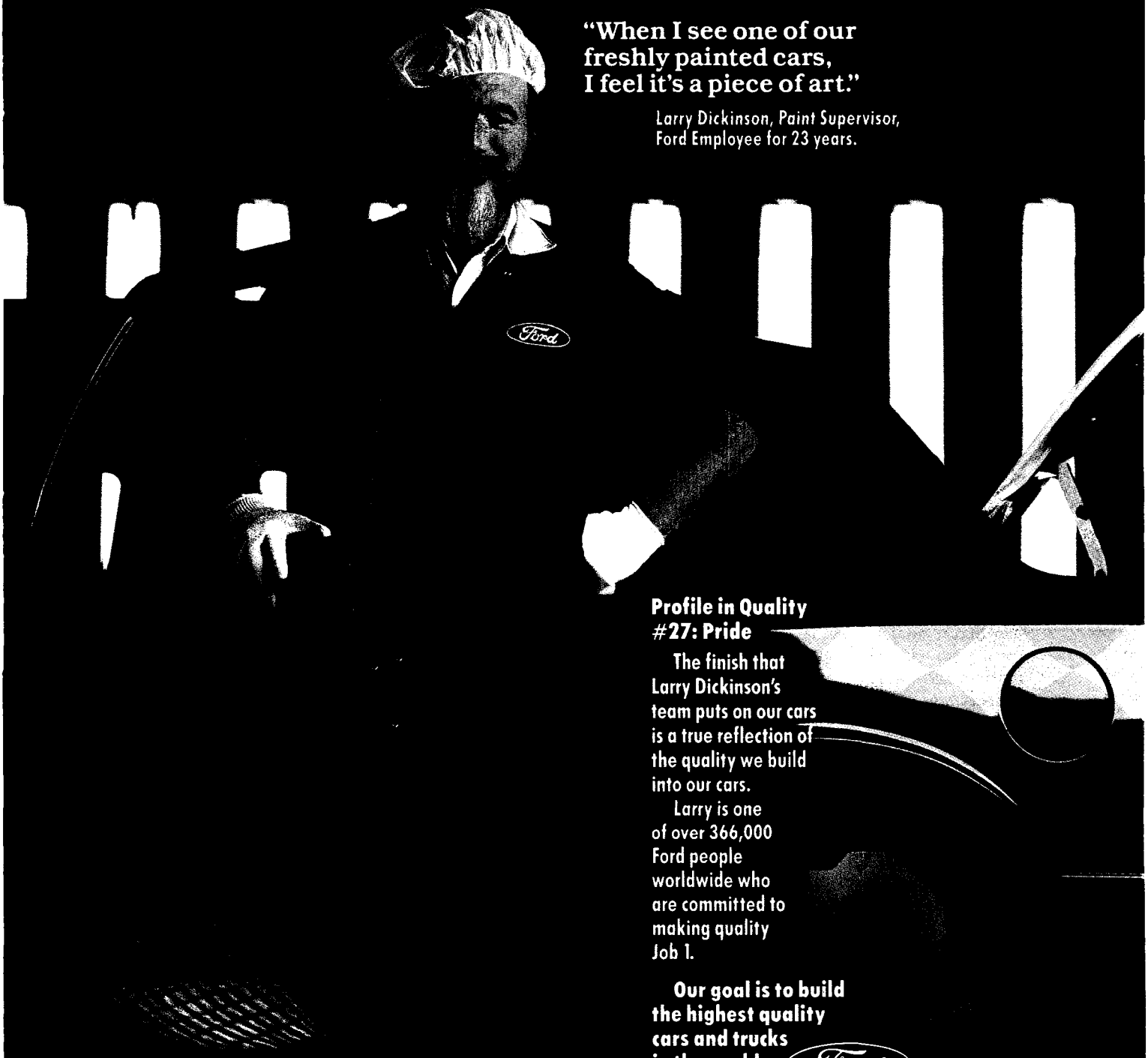

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JANUARY 20, 1992 VOL. XLIV, NO. 1

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LETTERS

Space for Aid

Your editorial "Yankee, Go Home" [Nov. 18] states quite accurately that "Each side bears some blame for the ignominious defeat in the Philippine Senate" of a treaty which would have extended by ten years the presence of the U.S. Navy at Subic Naval Base. I believe, however, you misidentified that for which the U.S. side is blameworthy by suggesting that we "upped the terms after the devastation of Mt. Pinatubo."

In 1979 the late President Marcos inaugurated the practice of explicitly linking U.S. assistance for the Philippines to U.S. use of Philippine military bases. This linkage thoroughly corrupted the character of the military-bases relationship by making it seem to be a real-estate transaction instead of a reflection of shared values and a joint interest in regional stability.

Our failure to break the connection between U.S. aid and the military bases contributed significantly to the "ignominious defeat." True, the Aquino administration—bowing to what it believed to be the sense of the Philippine Senate—insisted throughout the negotiations on retaining this vestige of the Marcos era. But we were mistaken in acceding to the wishes of our counterparts and deficient in failing to dissuade them from mixing a lethal cocktail of nationalism and cash.

Just prior to the June eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, the two negotiating panels were on the verge of agreeing to an eight-year U.S. tenure at the bases for $363 million per year in appropriated assistance. Pinatubo then removed Clark Air Base, Crow Valley training range, and three other installations from the negotiating agenda. When the Philippine government continued to insist on an aid–bases linkage—even post-Pinatubo—our choice was to pledge the same amount of money for Subic only (which itself had sustained over $250 million in damage) or an amount lower than $363 million per year. In consideration of U.S. taxpayer equities and congressional sentiment (including the specter of further domestic base closures), we opted for the latter course and reached full agreement with the Aquino administration.

I cannot deny that some anti-bases senators in the Philippines may have characterized the lower compensation figure "as akin to a landlord's taking advantage of a family put out of its home by a fire." I would make only two points in reply. First, the senators brushed aside President Bush's pledge to help the Aquino administration meet its goal of raising $2 to $4 billion for a special fund targeted at Pinatubo relief. Second, anyone who is attracted to the landlord–tenant analogy would recognize instantly that Mt. Pinatubo put *us* out of property owned by the Philippine government. If we're the rapacious landlords, why are we planning now to depart Subic?

We can and should be blamed for not convincing the Aquino administration to spike this destructive real-estate mentality once and for all. We failed miserably in this regard. We probably should have stood firm on this issue. Yet to be cast in the role of villainous landlord is a bit much.

Richard L. Armitage
Special Negotiator for the
Philippine Base Negotiations
Washington, D.C.

Modified Dissent

Though I agree with much of *NR*'s editorial, "Fortune Favors the Brave" [Dec. 16], I cannot agree that it is right to abandon President Bush in 1992. Sure, conservatives have resaon for disappointment on some fronts, but on many others—cited fairly in the editorial's first paragraph—there is much to applaud. In the totality of his acts, George Bush deserves our support. Conservatives should support him as, at the same time, they urge him and his advisors in a more consistent conservative direction.

William Bennett
Washington, D.C.

Honor at Stake

I have spent some hours today reviewing pertinent materials in *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*. I do not hesitate to say that there is not a scintilla of evidence in all those volumes that Wilson was an adulterer as asserted by Matthew Scully in his review of August Heckscher's *Woodrow Wilson* ["Poetic Charm," Nov. 4]. That President Wilson had a strong feeling of intellectual and spiritual affection for Mary Allen Hulbert (Peck) is incontrovertible. After 1907, when he first met her, he wrote very frequently to her in terms that could be described as extravagantly respectful, warm, and affectionate. In 1915, a series of circumstances caused him suddenly to realize that these letters had been imprudent for a man in public life and that in the hands of unscrupulous political opponents they could be so distorted as to seriously damage if not ruin him. He reacted with remorse as extravagant as his letters had been.

But the fact remains that his letters had nothing of the sensual, let alone sexual, in them. They cannot be judged by any objective observer to have been even "romantic." When one compares them to letters to his first wife, Ellen, written often on the same day as the letters to Mrs. Peck, when Ellen was away on a vacation that he could not share, one sees at once the complete difference between the letters to his "dearest friend" (Mrs. Peck) and the passionate letters of love to Ellen Wilson.

At the very period when Mr. Scully alleges that adultery occurred, Wilson himself several times stated in the strongest possible terms that he had never done anything whatever which would besmirch the honor of his friend, Mrs. Peck, or that of his wife, Ellen. Or, one might add, that of his future wife, Edith Bolling Galt.

Perry Laukhuff
Amherst, Va.

From Mr. Heckscher's book, page 173: "While most aroused over Princeton issues Wilson saw his relations with Mary Peck enter a new phase, in all probability changing from a romantic friendship into a love affair. Later he implied as much. In 1915, during the White House years, in an unpublished, anguished document, he admitted to 'a passage of folly and gross impertinence' in his life, during which he had forgotten 'standards of honorable behavior.'"

He said of his wife at the same time (page 175): "She, too, knew and understood and has forgiven."

To read this saddens me, too, and I would like very much to believe Mr. Laukhuff's explanation. Certainly, his acquaintance with Wilson's life and work makes him a good judge of Wilson's character, and his judgment of the evidence counts for no less than Mr. Heckscher's. The latter does, however, arrive at a different conclusion. —MS

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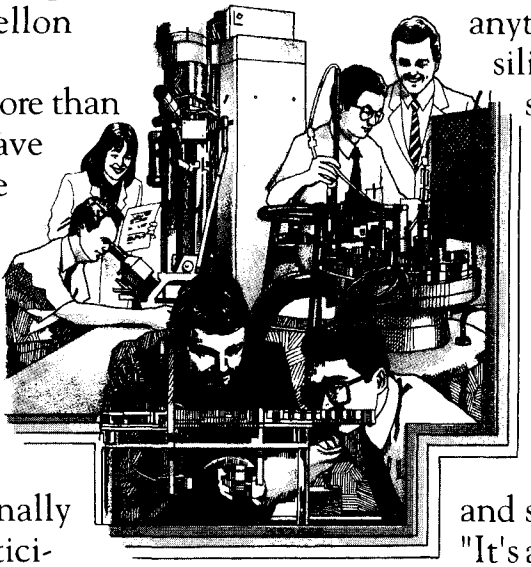
Where U.S. Researchers Find a Home Away From Home In Japan

Researchers are adventurers at heart. So it's no surprise that when Hitachi invited materials scientist Dr. Joseph O. Artman to spend six months this year working at its Central Research Laboratory (HCRL) in Tokyo, he eagerly accepted. "It gave me an opportunity to work in a new area, magneto-optics, and to see for myself how Japan works," recalls the Carnegie Mellon University professor.



Dr. Artman is one of more than 40 U.S. scientists who have worked in Japan over the last six years as participants in Hitachi's Research Visit Programs (HIVIPS). The programs aim to advance science through collaborative research and to enrich participants' lives personally and professionally. Participants work side-by-side with Hitachi scientists on basic problems in electronics and information systems.

For Dr. C.A. Cain, chairman of the University of Michigan's Bioengineering Program, HIVIPS proved a welcome sabbatical. "For the first time in years, I was able to pursue new ideas without interruption," he says. "In my time there, I basically defined my research directions for the next five years."

HIVIPS participants were struck by the effort to make them feel at home in Japan. "One of the nicest things about the program was the friends I made," says Dr. Cain. "We still do joint research and exchange visits," he adds.

HCRL's research facilities impressed the visitors. "I could do just about anything to a piece of silicon that I wanted to," says John Snyder, a Stanford University doctoral student in electrical engineering, who worked on a new kind of transistor. The visitors also appreciated the natural beauty of HCRL's campus,with its goldfish-stocked lake and sheltering woodlands. "It's an oasis of calm in Tokyo," says Dr. Cain.

Hitachi is proud to sponsor the HIVIPS program. We believe that it can make a significant contribution to science, to its participants' lives, and to a better understanding between the U.S. and Japan.

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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FROM THE EDITOR

Home Thoughts from Abroad

■ One of the curiosities of traveling abroad is to be continually reminded of America. Button-down shirts, blue jeans, hamburgers (whether McDonald's or some local imitation like the oddly named Wimpy), jazz, Hollywood icons from John Wayne to Marilyn Monroe—the modern world has a sharply American look and a sometimes deafening American sound.

This admiring imitativeness has its occasional absurdities. And it glosses over America's real problems, which, to be sure, look modest enough from the vantage points of Eastern Europe or the Third World. But it also reflects a widespread (and accurate) sense that America caters to the tastes of its ordinary citizens. And because there is an underlying similarity between popular tastes everywhere at some level—*viz.* the universal popularity of Mickey Mouse—American popular culture has a strong subversive power.

Hence, in the campaign against *Dallas* and U.S. cultural imperialism generally, waged recently by the European Commission, bureaucrats are battling not the U.S., but their own citizens. When it comes to safeguarding European culture, they simply do not believe that the audience has the right, in Bentham's words, to prefer pushpin to poetry.

Some conservatives may find this cultural protectionism congenial in theory. In real life, however, it is employed to safeguard not poetry but domestically produced pushpin. If there is anything less elevated than *Dallas*, it is a European imitation of *Dallas*, in which French actors play German businessmen committing adultery in badly dubbed English. The first such monstrosity, hailed as a harbinger of the "new Europeanism," recently collapsed through lack of audience interest while *Dallas* re-runs continue to pack them in. High standards can be achieved even in low matters.

And if Racine were to be foisted onto a reluctant audience, why should it replace *Cagney and Lacey* rather than, say, *Jeux sans Frontières*? American culture, after all, is the sturdy offspring of European, in particular of English, culture. The British would have special cause for complaint if they were made to watch a translation of Sartre rather than a play by Tennessee Williams on grounds of protecting their cultural heritage.

But when it comes to "building Europe," nothing would surprise me.

■ In one area, however, the cultural influence of the U.S. is noticeably lagging. American football takes second place to soccer around the world. And though England ceased to be the market leader in soccer almost forty years ago (when Hungary hammered England at Wembley), it is English teams that much of the world still follows.

They do the English football pools in Sweden; they watch the BBC's *Match of the Day* in Eastern Europe; and way out in the Indian Ocean, Mauritians are unanimously fans of Manchester United. When, on vacation there, I revealed that I had been brought up in Liverpool (whose team is not doing well this year), I was subjected to much ironical consolation.

The next World Cup, however, is taking place in the one country where soccer is not especially popular—this one. Will it finally become a popular American game? That would be cultural imperialism, of course. But if the U.S. became the game's Mecca, buying up the best players, who would be colonizing whom?

■ Both American television and British soccer cross frontiers easily because they are conducted in English. English is now the sole world language, both a passport to economic opportunity and an exchange mart of different cultures. Everwhere it is learnt feverishly—except in America, where non-English-speakers are deliberately encouraged to stick to their own tongues. Multicultural imperialism?

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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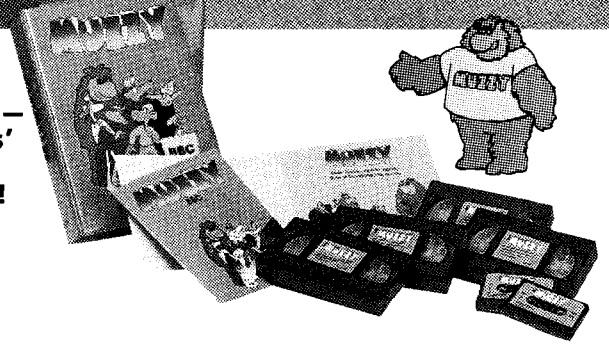

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FOR THE RECORD

■ As presidential election year gets under way, none of the 1992 candidates—except President **Bush** himself—was a candidate in 1988. On Democratic side, **Mario Cuomo** (N.Y.) has left the Six Debaters—**Jerry Brown** (Calif.), **Bill Clinton** (Ark.), **Tom Harkin** (Iowa), **Bob Kerrey** (Neb.), **Paul Tsongas** (Mass.), **Doug Wilder** (Va.)—to battle it out among themselves. . . . Clinton may now be Democratic frontrunner, so his thoughts on the big issues bear watching. In a speech on foreign policy at Georgetown University December 12, he positioned himself solidly in centrist **Sam Nunn** camp of Democratic Party. (In fact, he was better than Sen. Nunn in his forthright support of Gulf War.) However, it is reported that his foreign-policy advisors are all refugees from **George McGovern** and **Gary Hart** campaigns and from **Cyrus Vance** wing of **Carter** Administration. . . . On Republican side, **David Duke** will not join **Pat Buchanan** in challenge to President until after New Hampshire. Indeed, political analyst **Kevin Phillips** says Duke may even support Buchanan in New Hampshire race. (Thanks, pal.) . . . Duke has frightened Texas GOP by threatening to run in its primary this spring. However, Duke failed to get enough signatures on petitions to put him on ballot in Massachusetts, and he has withdrawn from Maryland race, citing lack of money and of campaign workers. Maryland was one of states that **George Wallace** carried in 1972 Democrat ic primary. . . . George Bush, who says he wants a Republican majority in Congress, has chosen as campaign manager **Fred Malek**—a Republican operative who has donated big bucks to at least four prominent Democratic candidates: **Frank Lautenberg** (N.J.), **Dianne Feinstein** (Calif.), **Tim Wirth** (Colo.), and **Chuck Robb** (Va.). The Republican Party is an even bigger tent than **Lee Atwater** thought.

■ In year that saw burial of twentieth century's most potent political emblem, the hammer and sickle—as **Mikhail Gorbachev** formally yielded to **Boris Yeltsin** and became 1991's best-known "Ghost of History"—**Freedom House**, for first time in 21 years of surveying political rights worldwide, found a majority of world's nations ruled by multi-party democracies. Free and Partly Free countries, by Freedom House's reckoning, cover all of Europe, except for **Yugoslavia**, and entire Western Hemisphere, except for **Cuba** and **Haiti**. Countries split during the cold war stack up this way: **East** and **West Germany**, united and Free; **North** and **South Vietnam**, united and Not Free; **South Korea**, Free, and **North Korea**, Not Free; **Taiwan**, Partly Free, and **China**, at 1.15 billion people, the largest collection of Not Free souls on earth. . . . In Vietnam Dr. **Nguyen Dan Que**—who spent ten years, from 1978 to 1988, in Vietnamese gulag for agitating for human rights—was sentenced to twenty years for "subversive activities against the people's power": i.e., signing petition calling on Hanoi to "respect the human, civil, and property rights of the people." In Washington, Vietnamese-Americans and friends—including author **Al Santoli**, former Navy Secretary **James Webb**—are proposing Que for Nobel Peace Prize. . . . Not the European Community nor the United Nations nor anyone else has come any closer to ending civil war in Yugoslavia. White House is hesitating over recognition of **Slovenia** and **Croatia**, now being carved up by the Federal—i.e., Serbian—army. **Richard Nixon**, for one, thinks we should not only take this step but give those two governments weapons to protect their new independence. . . . Canadians are looking to former premier **Joe Clark**, now constitutional affairs minister in **Brian Mulroney**'s Progressive Conservative government, to save their country from falling apart. A complicated solution to Quebec separatism has been worked out and will soon be presented to Canadians for their approval. Clark's job will be to persuade Quebec and the rest of Canada that a bad marriage is better than separation or divorce. . . . **World Future Society** is less sanguine than Clark about Canada's future. It forecasts secession of Quebec in 1996, with the rest of Canada joining United States by 2010.

■ While *Time* quotes feminists within the church as believing **Virgin Mary** needs to be relaunched as a feminine divinity because Judaeo-Christianity is obstinately male, mystery writer **P. D. James** wonders why, although **God** is frequently claimed as member of womankind, no one seems to think in the same way about **Satan**. Those who note evolutions in church usage (Three Wisepersons) may safely conclude the Devil will remain firmly male.

"He's a terrible military strategist and no great shakes as an economist, but, boy! can he suppress dissent."

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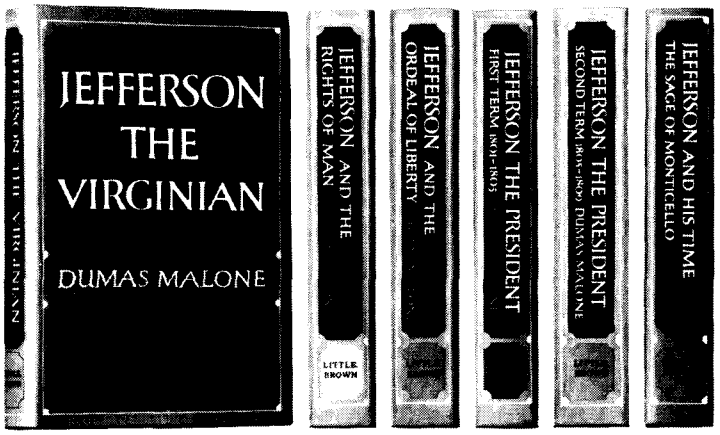

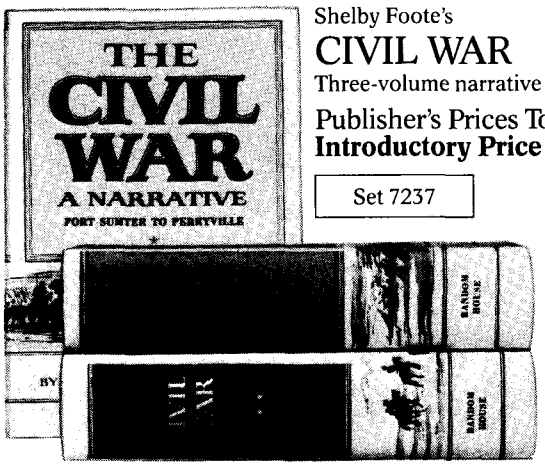

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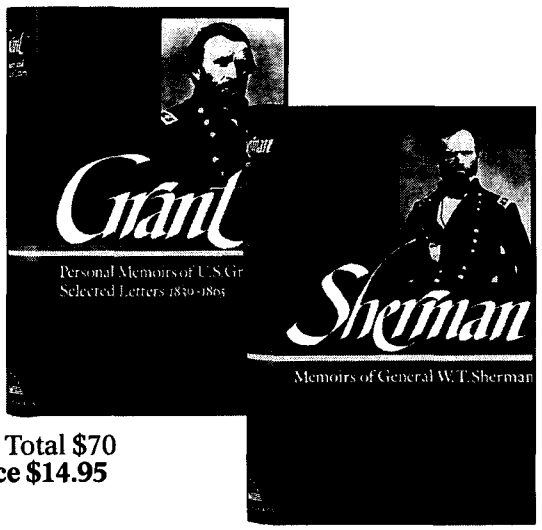

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THE WEEK

■ Get tough with the Japanese, Mr. President. Tell them we'll resist any effort on their part to buy Pearl Harbor.

■ Back when George Bush was at least forthright about "voodoo economics," the central idea he was pushing was that people really didn't change their behavior according to tax laws. Maybe Dick Darman should take a look at his boss's tax return. *Money* magazine reports that by declaring a hotel room in Houston to be his official residence (he spent three nights there in 1991, for $264 per night), he avoided some $29,000 in state and local taxes he would have had to pay if he declared himself a resident of either the District of Columbia or Kennebunkport, Maine. (Texas has no state income tax.) In other words, by using a hotel front George Bush managed to pay $3,596 in state and local taxes on a net income of $452,732, less than your average Ralph Kramden pays on a bus driver's salary and something that is likely to end up in a Bill Clinton commercial if we know campaign consultant James Carville. So maybe we read Bush wrong. Maybe "No New Taxes" wasn't a campaign pledge he broke but a New Year's resolution he kept.

■ Howell Heflin, chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Ethics, is slipping off his mantle, explaining that "it's not a pleasant task to have to judge your colleagues." Senator Heflin tried to make the task as pleasant as possible by judging them so seldom—the Keating Five got off with wrist-slaps under his tenure. Or maybe senators don't like to enforce the rules because they see there are too many rules (written, of course, by themselves). Some such thought must have crossed the mind of Bob Kerrey when he was questioned about child-labor-law violations in a chain of Nebraska restaurants of which he is part owner. The violations were not Scrooge-like, more on the order of hiring teenagers because Nebraska's low unemployment rate (2.2 per cent) makes adults hard to get. Senator Kerrey acknowledged that government regs were the "most difficult" obstacle to starting a business, but insisted that he backed the regs on child labor. A thought: if the Senate writes *more* regulations, maybe unemployment will rise to the point where no one will want to hire teenagers, even in Nebraska.

■ Mario Cuomo has now eliminated himself as a presidential candidate not only this year, but perhaps forever, and doing so might have been his unconscious intention all along. Governor Cuomo's handling of state affairs is of a character that would land a private businessman in prison. For example, faced with a looming $875-million deficit, Cuomo raised $200 million by the fishy expedient of selling Attica prison to the Urban Development Corporation. The UDC raised the $200 million by selling thirty-year bonds. Taking interest payments into account, the $200 million will in the end cost taxpayers $490 million. Such devices are necessary because Governor Cuomo is unwilling to shrink the size of the state payroll. New York has 7 per cent of the nation's population, but it consumes 20 per cent of the national expenditure for Medicaid and social services. If New York's per-capita public expenditures were those of say, California, Cuomo's budget would show a surplus. Not surprisingly, therefore, journalists who have followed him closely notice that he hates to spend a night away from home. He is an isolate, comfortable only with his family, a tiny circle of friends and advisors, and his diary, in which he meditates on things mundane and cosmic. The rest of the country would have been too large a reproach.

■ The White House Council on Competitiveness is studying the issue of wetlands preservation, to *The New Yorker*'s puzzlement: "The link to competitiveness was not readily apparent." We're pleased to announce the formation of the Committee to Restore 20 West 43rd Street to Swampland. Eustace Tilley, get out your waders.

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■ In the midst of a Christmas celebration that saw the red flag lowered from the Kremlin walls for the last time, it's perhaps understandable that so little news space was devoted to the ongoing revolution on the island of Taiwan. By now Taiwan's economic miracle has become a cliché, but less well known is the country's political maturation. In December President Lee Teng-hui made good on his inaugural promise by holding the first free elections for the National Assembly—which decides constitutional questions—to be followed next year by elections for the legislature. In the National Assembly elections the ruling Kuomintang captured some 71 per cent of the vote, largely because the opposition identified itself with formal independence, which angers the Mainland and leaves most Taiwanese nervous. The larger significance, however, is that the heirs of Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo are on the way toward a truly revolutionary achievement: transforming their country into the world's first Chinese democracy, no mean feat given China's cultural and political legacy. The more significant question today is not who lost China but who is winning it.

■ Communism may be dead, but Scrooge lives. The ACLU has forced Milwaukee to end its blatantly unconstitutional policy of delaying evictions until after the Christmas holidays. And the ACLU cannot even offer Scrooge's alternative accommodation: "Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?"

■ Another worthy contender for a visit from the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come is the Labor Council of Akron/Medina County, Ohio. It told union members not to give anything to the Salvation Army this year, because the cash-pinched Army used only 75 per cent union labor for some renovation work on two buildings.

■ Harvard's conservative magazine, *Peninsula*, recently put out a special issue exploring the topic of homosexuality. There is not a flippant word, an uncharitable comment, or a gratuitous caricature in the entire 55-page issue. But the authors do presume to suggest, in an article entitled "The Courage to Change: A Survey of Help Groups for Homosexuals," that homosexuality is an alterable condition. Another essay offers the datum that every major faith on earth has regarded homosexual behavior as spiritually destructive. Another suggests that sodomy might have something to do with AIDS. The response? Rallies, indignant editorials in other campus publications, and calls for reprisals anonymously posted around campus—thoughtfully including the home phone numbers of *Peninsula*'s ten staffers. To their credit, a few critics of the journal did acknowledge its sober tone and sincere intent. But when a formal debate was arranged on the question, "Can Opposition to Homosexuality Be Justified?" it was protested on the grounds that "Hate speech is unacceptable." "Don't Sit Down with Bigots!" flyers urged. From such case studies in tolerance we may surmise what would follow a symbolic decriminalization of sodomy: the criminalization of "unacceptable" thoughts regarding it.

■ That many Israelis strenuously object to the performance of Wagner in their country is understandable. Few Americans are aware of it, but the composer wrote anti-Semitic pamphlets of an insane virulence. When first sampling them, you think they must be a hoax—but, unfortunately, they are not. And it doesn't help that Hitler was a serious, though amateur, appreciator of the music. Indeed, one can sense Wagnerian techniques in the slowly building cadences of a Hitler speech; the great Nuremberg rallies, with their "cathedrals" of searchlights and torchlight parades, were Wagnerian; and Hitler's final immolation in the Berlin Bunker may remind us of *Götterdämmerung*. Still Wagner *was* a great composer. Art does soar above the mortal artist. Believe the tale, not the often silly or evil teller.

■ It has been disclosed that the Reverend Al Sharpton was ordained to the ministry at age ten. Not, we feel, exactly what was meant by "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

■ Salman Rushdie, still on the lam from Iranian literary critics, reappeared last month in New York City, where at least he has about the same odds as everyone else of facing abrupt and violent death.

The Last General Secretary

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Gorbachev had begun in 1985 with the correct perception that reality was rendering the old system unworkable in the modern age. It was a system dependent on lies and brutality—lies about the system's performance and brutality to enforce obeisance

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to the lies. He sought a New Model Communism that could attract the voluntary efforts and willing cooperation of its people—an economy that would be more decentralized and flexible, a political process that would be more participatory.

In Eastern Europe, similarly, his avowed aim was to replace the coercive relations of the past with a more voluntary basis for bloc unity. He sought to replace old-line Party bosses with reformers like himself, seeing this as the perfect answer to the satellites' chronic problems of economic performance, internal legitimacy, and relations with Moscow. Such reform Communists would feel themselves natural partners of the reform leadership in the Kremlin, making common cause against the hard-liners in all their countries.

The flaw in this vision, of course, was that when the factor of fear was removed, there was nothing left that Soviet or Eastern European peoples had the slightest interest in. Given a free choice, they didn't want a benign form of Communism; they wanted the real thing: democracy and independence. They couldn't wait to throw the bums out—an unsurprising anti-incumbent reaction after a forty-year (or seventy-year) record of criminality and incompetence unmatched by any political party in world history.

Thus, Gorbachev's vigorous pursuit of change was enough to delegitimize the old system and sap its strength, but not to save it. Gorbachev had let loose a process of demoralization and political unraveling he could not stop.

To his everlasting credit, he let this process run its course. There were outbursts of bluster, to be sure—peremptory presidential decrees, sporadic threats to stomp on the republics (the Nancy Sinatra Doctrine)—but, overall, he refrained from systematic (or effective) resort to the brutality of the past. On this point he stood his moral ground, and for *that* in a perverse way he may even deserve the Nobel Peace Prize. (Only in a Soviet leader, however, can it be considered an exemplary act to refrain from murdering one's own people.)

He was justly praised for his tactical brilliance. He maneuvered between the zealots of Right and Left, splitting the difference between their programs, convincing each side that he was shielding it from the excesses of the other. He thus maintained a balance between them that averted a civil war, while the tide inexorably flowed in the direction of reform. When a coup was attempted in August 1991, the hard-liners had been too much weakened and the trend of democratization in the society had become too strong for the coup to succeed. That was to his credit, too. But when the hard-liners were defeated, his balancing act was over.

Gorbachev's ultimate failure was intellectual. "Splitting the difference" between Communism and freedom was not a policy that had ultimate meaning. He lacked the clarity of vision to understand that the system had to be destroyed and replaced, not just reformed. His own faith in the socialist ideal made him cling, far too long, to the Communist Party and the central apparatus, which remained his political base. He never understood that wholesale marketization of the economy—a leap to private property—was the only hope. He offered the republics a variety of improved union treaties, but he denied their right to sovereignty, which to them was the starting point.

Therefore, Gorbachev was not, and could not be, the one to lead the country where it had to go. He did not—and may still not—understand the totality of the break with the past that was required. Boris Yeltsin—who long ago renounced the Communist Party, who long ago repudiated the socialist economic system, who long ago conceded the sovereignty of the republics—was in a far better position to build a new structure on the ruins of the old. Even the army recognized that any hopes for stability and cohesion rested with the new voluntary commonwealth that Yeltsin conceived. Nor was there any hope for economic revival until the political structure was settled. Yet Gorbachev's final performance was a pathetic combination of desperate resistance, whining incomprehension, and cynical alarmism directed toward the West.

In Moscow they joked that Gorbachev was Moses, not Joshua; he would not make it to the next phase of history. But that's unfair to Moses. Unlike Gorbachev, Moses had seen and understood what the Promised Land looked like; he wasn't clinging to a "restructured" version of the pharaonic code. Gorbachev's clinging to the old ways prolonged and deepened the economic crisis, even as the political process he had unleashed propelled his country toward a Promised Land of democracy he had never sought.

—PETER W. RODMAN

The Ash Heap of History

MERCIFULLY, the destruction of the Soviet state and empire came with a whimper instead of a bang. It is now a safer and better world than it was a month ago. We wish the Bush Administration could get into the spirit of things, instead of moping about it. The Administration seems to view the old regime nostalgically as an efficient system of command and control over nuclear weapons; it forgets that it was also a very efficient system of command and control over people. The people who suffered under it grievously for 74 years have no such nostalgia. Neither should we.

The nuclear issue will be solved in the end. The Administration is correct to insist on a clear chain of

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command and rigorous accountability. But there are a variety of ways of doing this. We suspect that Ukraine and others will never let go of some share of control, as their ultimate historical reassurance against Russian domination. Nor should they. It is odd that the Administration is so eager to reconstitute the entire Soviet nuclear arsenal in the sole hands of a man whom they still privately disparage as a would-be dictator. A degree of *de*centralization of control over that arsenal would seem to be in the general interest.

As has long been evident, *NR* does not share the fashionable nostalgia for Mikhail Gorbachev either. He was as much the effect as he was the cause of what has happened in the recent period. A revived West presented a mortal challenge to the Soviet system in the mid Eighties—a computer revolution, flaunting our technological supremacy at the moment of the Soviet economy's systemic stagnation; a reinvigorated Western foreign and defense policy (INF deployments, SDI, support of anti-Communist insurgents) raising the costs to the Soviets just at the moment when a new generation of leaders was trying to confront the internal crisis; a worldwide democratic revolution that made a mockery of their historical pretensions. In other words, it was the vitality of democracy and the solidarity of the democratic world over 45 years that made all this happen, not the spontaneous genius of a Messiah from Stavropol. Pity that Mr. Bush didn't think of making this point on the day of Gorbachev's resignation.

There are those, believe it or not (especially in Western Europe), who so yearn for Gorby that they hold out hope for a comeback. When the Commonwealth runs into trouble, they muse, the people will appreciate the departed leader. We doubt it. Gorbachev ended up totally mistrusted by both the reformers and the hard-liners, not to say despised. He has no constituency any more—save in the Western intellectual circles that now shower him with offers of teaching jobs, book contracts, and lecture tours. Whatever disasters the new Commonwealth may run into, Gorbachev is in no position to offer an alternative. The one thing that can be said with certainty is that (as the saying is) Gorbachev is history.

The Commonwealth is indeed off to a rocky start. It is torn by disagreements not only about economic and military policy, but also about the meaning of agreements already reached. Events are forcing the new states to make fundamental and fateful decisions in crisis conditions. They may make serious policy blunders; the experiment may fail in the end, to be followed by further anarchy and perhaps by the much-feared resurgence of authoritarianism. The West should be on its guard. But there is also the more benign possibility that the democratically elected leaders, knowing that autarky is slow suicide, will work out by trial and error new ways of cooperating in the common interest. Whatever the dangers, none of this makes us nostalgic for the old empire held together by force, ruled by the Communist Party and the KGB, and intent on undermining the free world.

Monetary Muddle Revisited

THE FED cut the discount rate by a full percentage point, even as Germany's Bundesbank was pushing European interest rates in the opposite direction. One immediate effect was to sink the dollar, but that may prove temporary if Europeans, like the Japanese, realize that their real interest rates are unnecessarily high. With inflation way down in all major countries over the past year, a case could be made for *simultaneous* interest-rate cuts by all the G-7 countries. The case for the U.S. going it alone is more problematic, since there is no question that weakness of the dollar, if it persists, must risk relatively higher U.S. inflation. Some argue that a weak dollar is good for trade, but inflation never made any country more competitive.

The most worrisome thing is the motive behind the Fed's move. The Fed Governors did not slash interest rates because of any signs of a deflationary squeeze, such as a soaring dollar or collapsing commodity prices. Instead, they apparently succumbed to the exaggerated political panic over a few mixed signals of short-term economic weakness. Monetary policy cannot serve two masters: it cannot be used to fine-tune real economic activity and also to stabilize the purchasing power of the dollar. If the Fed cuts interest rates whenever some monthly employment report is disappointing, investors will have good reason to anticipate that the Fed will likewise *raise* interest rates at the first glimmer of prosperity. Holding Fed policy hostage to the economic news makes it impossible to have sustained economic growth, because bond investors run for cover whenever they see signs of economic growth—fearing the Fed Governors will once again hike interest rates to abort even a non-inflationary expansion.

Monetary policy must instead be concerned with

They Still Hate Yeltsin

Though he led when the streets were unsafe,
Like the musical's flag-waving waif,
In the White House, they toast
Mr. Gorbachev's ghost
As his manners continue to chafe.

W. H. VON DREELE

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protecting the value of money. To improve the *real* economy requires minimizing government impediments to employment and investment—including punitive tax rates and costly trade barriers and regulations. The Fed can only print money; it can't print jobs.

Coming to a Yugoslav Republic Near You . . .

THE BLOODSHED continues in the breakaway Yugoslav republic of Croatia, unstanched by the umpteenth European-sponsored ceasefire. The republic of Bosnia–Herzegovina —which has declared its independence, and which contains large Serbian, Muslim, and Croatian minorities—stands at the slaughterhouse chute. The violence-to-come in Bosnia and the violence-in-progress in Croatia both spring from the same set of politicians: Serbian Communists, clinging to power by whipping up the passions of Serbian minorities in neighboring republics and of Serbs at home.

The quickest way to punish the war-makers would be by launching NATO air strikes on Serbian tank formations. This will not happen, for the simple reason that the United States does not feel its national interests directly threatened, and Europe, for all its fine rhetoric, is impotent without American leadership. But the mere threat of it would be enough to force the Serbia armed forces to accept and implement a genuine ceasefire. It is an ominous indicator of the growing *malaise* in Western councils that this possibility is never even discussed, let alone seriously examined.

There is an option, however, short of a Balkan Kuwait. The nations of the West can recognize the independence of the non-Serbian republics, and allow them to buy arms on the world market to defend themselves. This would at least raise the cost of aggression to Serbia and so provide an incentive for an early ceasefire. The European Community, prodded by Germany, has taken the belated first step of recognizing Croatia. With any luck, Bosnia will not have to wait several months and several thousand lives before getting the same treatment.

Constitutionally Correct

IT'S BEGINNING to look as though the only steadfast players left in the Bush Administration are Kemps. While Jack Kemp has been courageously urging the President back to the straight and narrow, the chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Evan J. Kemp Jr., is fighting against an ill-advised effort to shut down a radio station. He has done so, moreover, with marked courage in the face of personal anguish.

In Los Angeles last July, KFI radio station aired two call-in shows concerning local news anchors Bree Walker Lampley and Jim Lampley. Mrs. Lampley, who suffers from a genetic condition in which the bones of her hands and feet are fused together, was pregnant at the time, and the talk show revolved around whether she should have children if there was a chance they would be born disabled. The vast majority of those who called in argued, often graphically, that Mrs. Lampley had no right to become pregnant.

Under something called the Personal Attack Rule, the Lampleys and some 29 disabled-rights organizations filed a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission to revoke the station's license. The lawyer for the complainants even called Mr. Kemp to get him to sign on as well: after all, the EEOC chairman suffers from a neuro-muscular disease that confines him to a wheelchair, and he notes that his own family says they would have aborted him had they known. Though "appalled and sickened" by the broadcast contents, Mr. Kemp took a stand against the effort to censor the station, arguing in a personal statement that the only way to "save others like me" is to "take the discussion away from the doctors, ethics specialists, and attorneys and put it out on the streets." Mr. Kemp also made his case in a letter to FCC Chairman Alfred Sikes, thus raising the ante. He is supported by the conservative Institute for Justice, which has filed an objection claiming that the FCC's review of the material is unconstitutional.

Naturally this has not made Mr. Kemp popular among disabled-activist groups, or even with the FCC, which now finds its whole regulation under challenge. In the best possible world, no one would say the sort of things they did on KFI and FCC regulations would not be used to censor offensive speech. But in the world we have, we need more appointees like Evan Kemp who realize that the principle of toleration is most required when it protects views we find hateful and offensive.

The Coin's Other Side

Bear with me while my eyeballs pop
Observing T-bills as they drop
And CD rates head south the way
They did in Herbert Hoover's day.
It's swell if what you want's a house,
But I don't—which is why I grouse.

W. H. VON DREELE

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Presumed Innocent

LONG AGO and far away, as it now seems, Willie Smith was acquitted on a rape rap. Like most sensations, the case has evanesced, leaving the world pretty much as it was. It now seems a little silly that this trial was ever thought to have large implications for society.

Rape remains a tough charge to prove beyond a reasonable doubt, and Smith succeeded in establishing reasonable doubt. When serious, though ambiguous, testimony is excluded by the judge—in particular, the testimony of three women who say Smith attacked them sexually in the past—an acquittal hardly amounts to absolute proof of innocence. But let it be said that Smith's account of the night's events made at least as much sense as his accuser's.

Nor, on the other hand, does an acquittal signify that society is taking the charge of rape lightly. The

RIGHT DATA

Balance-Sheet Recession

WHY IS this recession different? Most economic downturns since World War II have been triggered by a build-up of unwanted inventories, the result of too much production relative to consumption. The current malaise, however, appears rooted in a glut of debt-financed real estate and industrial capacity. While excess inventories—and the debt incurred to finance them—can be worked off fairly quickly, it can take years for the economy to digest redundant office space, shopping malls, and industrial property.

A financial convalescence has been under way for some time. The annual growth rate of domestic debt peaked at 14.4 per cent in the last quarter of 1984, and is now below 5 per cent—the lowest rate since 1961. In 1991, for the first time since 1983, American corporations raised more money from new stock offerings than from debt. Similarly, households are liquidating auto and home-equity loans at record rates.

Most economists agree, however, that long-term growth requires more than just the repayment of old debts. A rise in the national savings rate—making more of our current income available for productive investment—is the *sine qua non* for higher living standards. Policies to increase the pool of available savings include the following:

1. *Reinstate Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs).* The 1986 Tax Reform Act ended tax-deductible IRAs for families with incomes greater than $50,000. The results were dramatic: in 1987 IRA contributions plummeted by 60 per cent, and the personal savings rate hit a forty-year low of 3.2 per cent. Most IRAs were funded from current income, not by shifting pre-existing assets into the accounts, as many had feared. As evidence: of the taxpayers with assets of less than $2,000 who opened IRAs in 1982, 71 per cent contributed to IRAs in 1983, and 66 per cent in 1984. With such a low level of wealth to begin with, these people could never have continued funding IRAs by simply reshuffling assets. A recent study showed that economic activity stimulated by deductible IRAs would increase federal revenues by nearly $20 billion through the year 2000. But the Federal Government, using a static revenue model, still views IRAs as a $6-billion "tax expenditure."

2. *Cut Capital-Gains-Tax Rates.* The U.S. and Australia are the only countries in the world to tax capital gains at the same rate as ordinary income. Other developed nations, and most economists, have long since concluded that capital-gains taxes discourage investment by lowering the return. Moreover, while Australia indexes assets for inflation, the U.S. tax code ignores the problem entirely, thereby subjecting many long-held assets to affective tax rates of over 100 per cent. Such confiscatory taxation discourages investors from reinvesting accumulated gains revenues.

3. *Eliminate Double Taxation of Dividends.* By allowing corporations to deduct interest but not dividends, the current tax code encourages debt over equity, perhaps contributing to the current "balance-sheet recession." The double taxation of equity income is a major factor behind our high cost of capital *vis-à-vis* Japan—where dividends paid to individuals are not taxed. The anti-equity bias is especially burdensome for newer and smaller companies, many of which have only limited access to commercial banks.

4. *Restore Corporate Investment Incentives.* The 1986 Tax Reform Act shifted $120 billion in federal tax liability from individuals to corporations, mainly via higher taxes on industrial equipment and structures. As a result, investment spending slowed after 1986, well before the current recession. Restoring growth incentives means reinstating the investment tax credit (ITC), which allowed corporations to deduct a portion of their investment outlays, and eliminating the alternative minimum tax (AMT), which, in effect, punishes firms that make large capital investments.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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doctrinaire feminist insists in effect that every rape trial end in a conviction. To the ideological mind, the presumption of guilt becomes a test of society's willingness to acknowledge the gravity of the act in question. If you let off an accused rapist, by this logic, you are condoning rape. Individual guilt or innocence ceases to matter. Feminists have attempted to strengthen the likelihood of conviction by inventing the concept of "date rape," which means not simply rape committed by an escort, but any sexual contact that a woman subsequently regrets.

But the traditional presumption of innocence stands in the way of the obsessive desire to avenge any form of crime. Civilized society has decided, over centuries, that the maxim *Primum non nocere*—Above all, do no harm—is as applicable to criminal law as to medicine; we prefer the risk of exonerating the murderer to the risk of convicting the innocent. The more serious the charge, the more urgent the protection of the accused. Liberalism has sometimes taken this protection to absurd lengths, but that is no argument for abandoning it.

This prejudice in favor of the innocent inevitably protects rapists more than other criminals, simply because in the case of rape it's sometimes doubtful whether a crime has even occurred. To a victim this is bound to seem a torturous paradox; but to a jury that can never be as certain as she is, there is no easy way to resolve it. That the crime is horrible is unquestionable. Whether it has been committed in a given case, alas, may be impossible for anyone but the defendant and the accuser herself to know.

Roger A. Freeman, R I P

IN THE snarl of political and intellectual struggle, it is often easy to forget how far we have come, and how many people helped get us here. Remember the guaranteed-annual-income bill of the early Seventies? Roger A. Freeman, who died Christmas Day, defeated it almost single-handedly with his congressional testimony, as he had earlier helped thwart federal takeovers of education funding in the Fifties and Sixties. He was one of the earliest intellectual warriors in the battle against federal takeover of states' powers and functions. A sensible and accomplished veteran of the private sector—rising to CFO of the Shoe Corporation of America five years after he arrived here at the age of 36, having fled Nazi Austria—he also worked for Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, and Nixon, and joined the Hoover Institution in 1962. With his ten major books (including *The Wayward Welfare State*) and numerous articles, in, among other publications, NATIONAL REVIEW, Roger Freeman's contributions to his adopted nation are immeasurable.

Good Luck, Mr. Greenspan

Like brave Horatio at the bridge
  Or Hans with half an arm
Inserted in a leaky dike
  To save the Dutch from harm,
He battles as his fiscal pals
  Stare transfixed at the debt,
Though Mr. Bush went shopping and
  The Congress seems to sweat.

W. H. VON DREELE

Warren Brookes, R I P

ON SATURDAY, December 28, the world's best journalist, Warren Brookes, died at his home in Lovettsville, Virginia, apparently of pneumonia. Warren was 62 years old and a Christian Scientist.

Warren Brookes was a one-man truth squad. For me, he was at his best exposing the fraudulent statistics used to attack President Reagan's economic record and the phony science used by the greens to bamboozle editors and the public about environmental issues. He blew the whistle on so many economists and environmentalists that he had become the most closely followed writer in the country. As a *Detroit News* editorialist, Creators Syndicate columnist, and star columnist for the *Washington Times*, he was without peer. His dissection of Richard Darman last fall was one of NATIONAL REVIEW's most widely talked about articles ever.

Just before his death Warren was honored by Gannett Newspapers for his environmental columns. Nothing escaped him—the Alar fraud, the dioxin fraud, the asbestos fraud, the lead fraud, the radon, radiation, polystyrene, acid-rain, global-warming, greenhouse, and ozone-depletion frauds. He delved into epidemiology and the incidence of skin cancer to expose environmental "studies" in error by 3,000 per cent. Invariably, months after a Brookes column, there would be a front-page *New York Times* headline, such as the one of August 15, 1991, "U.S. Officials Say Dangers of Dioxin Were Exaggerated."

Warren Brookes never won a Pulitzer for the simple reason that he never encapsulated the conventional wisdom of the day. He was always far ahead of his peers. He did, however, receive the highest praise a newsman can get—accolades from his competitor. On September 7, 1982, when Warren was still a columnist for the *Boston Herald*, he was profiled in the *Boston Globe* by David Warsh, who wrote

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that Warren "by generous measure is almost certainly the best in the nation at what he does."

Perhaps Warren's proudest moment was when Ronald Reagan quoted from his book, *The Economy in Mind*, in his Moscow State University speech emphasizing the spiritual and economic power of a free economy. We miss him, and for his wife, Jane, our condolences. —PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS

NOTES & ASIDES

■ *Remarks made at the memorial service for Edward Pulling, founder of Millbrook School, by Wm. F. Buckley Jr., Class of 1943.*

WHEN LAST NIGHT I sat down to compose these words I amused myself, as did, no doubt, my fellow eulogists, by reflecting that we were even now bound by orders handed down by Edward Pulling. It was always so. He helps us to understand the metaphysics of eternal life.

This final commandment, that we should remember Mrs. Pulling even as we remember him, is not difficult for those of us who fell in love with her, which was just about everybody; and were she alive today in the modern Millbrook, such sentiments would be an exercise in which even the Lesbian Liberation Movement could participate. There was the physical beauty, of course, and the natural grace, and the smile that was sheer joy, sometimes suggesting an appreciation of mischief, dare I say it, mischief which perhaps passed beyond the sight of her august husband. There was no smile exchanged with little boys, and gangling teenagers, quite so electrifying as that which one experienced, or thought one had experienced, as a shaft of communication between the First Lady of Millbrook and one of us, that saw her, along with us, surveying, enjoying, suffering from, one of the crotchets of the Headmaster on any given occasion. Oh, she would never cross him, at least not in our presence; but then who would? When last was this done? I remarked a few years ago, speaking at the academic ceremony on the eve of Commencement, that as a matriculating 15-year-old I simply was not able to understand how it was that when Mr. Pulling entered the armed forces in the First World War, the Kaiser hadn't simply surrendered.

But in later years I suspect that, well out of sight of us, she and The Boss (as we knew him) were on a footing much more nearly equal than one ever supposed possible with Edward Pulling. Perhaps the the immediate Pulling family was let in on it, perhaps

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not. But I choose to believe that she was perfectly capable of saying to him, "Ed, I find you impossibly pompous and overbearing today."

Did I say, "Ed"? He once asked me and my wife to call him Ed. My wife is not unlike Mr. Pulling in many ways, and coped with this invitation with the simple comment, "Are you crazy, Mr. Pulling?" My brother Reid was more descriptive. He wrote a letter to the Pulling children, after Mr. Pulling died, a letter of reminiscences that included this passage:

"Years later, when I had graduated from college and got back from the Air Force, we met on some social occasion in Millbrook; and he said to me in an access of bonhomie, 'Reid, call me Ed.' I choked. My Adam's apple quite stuck in my throat. My jaw froze in a sick rictus. 'Well, what's the matter with you?' Your dear mother asked me whether I wanted a glass of water. I gulped. I swallowed. I shook my head, walking dumbly away—leaving your father with a perplexed gaze on his handsome face. There was no way I could call him 'Ed.' . . . Some ten years later, in Madrid, I received the welcome news that your parents were coming for a week's visit. . . . We had a wonderful time. I was at once able to address your mother as Lucy, but in my mid thirties I had still a simply terrible time choking out, 'Ed.' This led to awkward circumlocutions. 'Lucy, would you kindly tell . . . your husband . . .' 'Lucy, would you be good enough to tell Mr. Pulling . . .' 'Lucy, would you (haw haw haw) remind The Boss that this . . .' *'Call me Ed, for heaven's sake!'* he finally exploded. But on each occasion I addressed him by his first name, I felt as though my tonsils were being ripped out."

I remember a line from the journals of Evelyn Waugh where he wrote that he loved intimacy, but hated informality. I think this was so of Edward Pulling. He was not a clubbable man. Informality is the enemy of the standards he absolutely insisted on, academic excellence, excellence in deportment, excellence in character: all of that. But he was made wise by the experiences he so copiously had, with the frailty of little boys, and great big grown-up boys.

And excellence wasn't something he himself absolutely succeeded in every respect in achieving. The enormous memory of my mischievous computer feeds me back a memo I sent to three or four special admirers of Ed Pulling five years ago:

> I am evil enough to quote to you four lines from a "novella" written by Edward Pulling and sent to me by him with the question, Did I know where he might have it published? I have not yet designed an appropriate reply to our former English teacher, God love him. But have a load of this:
>
> "The trotting ended as they reached the foot of the long hill up to the stable and conversation began again. John's first remark was:
>
> " 'I wonder, Sue, if the smell of horse sweat and hot saddle leather appeals to you as much as it does to me?'
>
> " 'Oh, yes,' exclaimed Susan. 'It is one of my very favorite smells, especially if the sweating horse is a well-groomed thoroughbred like Duchess, and even more so if added to it is the sweet aroma of new-mown hay, as we have today. I guess we are both pretty horsey people, John.' "

I don't remember what I wrote to Mr. Pulling. Though in his presence I was so trained in docility that I am sure I said something about the special sweetness of the smells combined of sweating horses and new-mown hay, and how nicely he had recalled this phenomenon for the benefit of his readers.

What an absolutely splendid couple. They did bestride this world, in Millbrook, as colossi, which I hope is the plural for colossus, or is it politically incorrect to punctuate our thoughts in Latin? Mr. Pulling sent around a short documentary about Millbrook in which he commented on the history of the school. In one passage he thought to say that he—and I quote him—"disagreed" with me about every single subject I had ever taken up. Ah, but then he was guilty of hyperbole, of course. He did not disagree with my assessment of his wife. Indeed he went on, in the same documentary, to contradict himself, by saying that I had once told him that I tolerated him only because I adored his wife.

Well, of course, I would never have presumed to say that I "tolerated" Edward Pulling. One might as well say that one tolerates Moses. But I did write to tell him that I thought it very courageous to say that he disagreed with me about most things. "I admire," I said in my letter, "such professions of modesty."

I dedicated my book *Gratitude: Reflections on What We Owe to Our Country*, to Edward Pulling, and I am grateful that he saw the book before he died. What we owe to our country includes not least, for those of us who spent years in this place before 1951, the company we were allowed to keep, whose presence will be with us, always. **—WFB**

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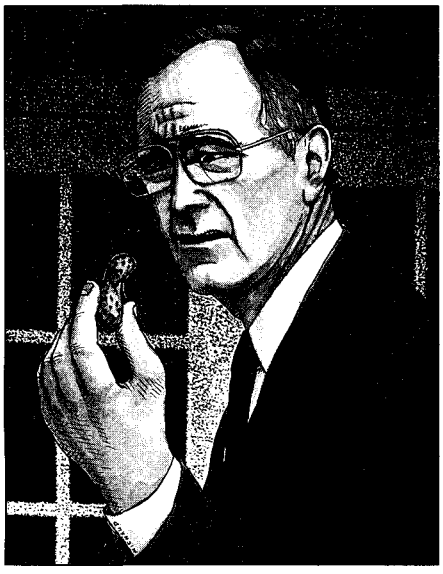
ON THE SCENE

Memo to the President

WILLIAM McGURN



John Michaud

PLAINS, GA.

Memo to: George Bush
From: James Earl Carter
Re: State of the Union

Well, the big day—the State of the Union—is fast approaching now, and though I can't say we've ever been particularly close I feel a certain kinship with you watching the talk shows these days. You probably heard Carson the other night. You're finally honest enough to admit we might now be in a recession, technically speaking, and he says he has another news flash for you: "Lindbergh made it." Or you try to show your concern for the common man by going to J. C. Penney's and picking up $28 worth of socks, and Jay Leno twists it around to suggest you don't care ("You think Bush is unpopular now, wait until his grandchildren get their Christmas presents"). Or you try not to alarm people with your statements on the economy, and David Letterman puts out a list of ten ways to know when Washington is telling us we're in a recession (No. 4: "Hey, we're still better than any South American country you want to name"). I know how it feels. I've been there.

That's why I thought I'd offer you some advice before your big night; after all, I'm a veteran of four State of the Unions, and each one was worse than the year before. First off, that $300 tax credit you guys were considering was a good idea. You may recall I proposed more or less the same thing in 1977, but mine was only $50. It's solid Republican stuff: a chicken in every pot, and all that. Good politics, too. People out of work could buy a VCR and take their minds off the economy. You outdid me on that one, but I'm sorry to see you let the conservatives derail you.

I just hope they won't persuade you to abandon the cornerstone of your domestic agenda, the 1990 budget accord. Admittedly, this is a hard sell. The State of the Union is a bear even in the best of circumstances, and you'll have to put in a paragraph for Sam Skinner's $151-billion transportation bill, one for Lamar Alexander's million-dollar schools proposal, and one for every other Cabinet officer.

In all honesty I have to say some of the difficulty is of your own making. First, you told everyone the recession was over when it had barely started. Then, all Christmas season you told everyone to wait for the State of the Union. But all the White House staffers I've talked to concede off the record that you still have no idea what you're going to offer. You're a father, you should know: you don't put visions of sugar plums into your children's heads when all you can really offer them is a pair of Penney tube socks. I go back to my original point about malaise: the job of a modern President is to lower expectations, not raise them. Reagan never understood this.

The Right still doesn't understand it. Explicitly or inexplicitly, what they want you to do is walk away from the budget agreement. If you did just that, I'm not sure Pat Buchanan would have a campaign theme left. Geez, Jack Kemp is even suggesting you argue for slashing the cap-gains tax to *zero* and appeal to Democrats like Pat Moynihan or Charles Rangel who have tax-cutting proposals. Dick Armey, no friend of John Sununu, says you got the wrong man, that it should have been Darman.

Don't these guys get the message? I see Barbara was out in New Hampshire complaining that Congress has never considered any of your growth packages. (That was a nice touch; no one's going to boo Babs.) But how many *Republican* growth packages have there been that *you* haven't considered? Let's see, there was DeLay–Wallop. Of course, Phil Gramm and Newt Gingrich watered that one down with their own proposal ("Growth lite," said the Reaganite chorus). Bob Kasten and Vin Weber came out with a family-based tax cut, and you ignored that one too. Just before Thanksgiving the Republican Conference passed their own package and urged you to keep the Democrats in session until they either passed it or went on record against it. You didn't go for any of them. And rightly so.

I know, it made for a tough Christmas. Too bad about all those headlines—IBM agreeing to massive layoffs for the first time in its history; General Motors firing 74,000 people and saying they didn't expect the economy to improve; retailers saying they hadn't had such a bad season since, well, me. The Fed's Alan Greenspan didn't help matters the other day when he said the economy had faltered. But the *New York Times* did help you with the spin on that one. On the front page, there was Alan under the headline, "Greenspan bleak about economy, warns against quick fix." Not until you got to the end of the story, way back on page D-15, did they quote his saying that only a cut in the capital-gains tax would provide immediate benefits, especially for the real-estate market.

I have to admit you had me worried when you canned Sununu, because it looked like you were re-thinking the

Mr. McGurn is NR*'s Washington Bureau Chief.*

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whole deal. But this fear passed when I saw your new campaign team. There's Bob Mosbacher, Mr. Big Business, solid budget-accord supporter. Pollster Bob Teeter is an excellent choice, too; remember, he was the one who urged you to renege on your tax pledge on the grounds that no one believed your word in the first place. Mary Matalin—well, you needed someone up there to balance all those wealthy, male Republicans, and anyway Mary deserved a pat on the back for her role in getting rid of Sununu by giving the *Washington Post*'s Ann Devroy all those juicy little tidbits about him. Charlie Black? Okay, you need a sop to the Right, and at least he didn't make any noise about tax cuts or growth when he was acting RNC chief. Fred Malek? Now that's real bi-partisanship. I mean, all those contributions to Democrats like Dianne Feinstein, Frank Lautenberg, and Tim Wirth. Guess he's still trying to make up for his role as Nixon's designated Jew-counter. Which goes to my point. Nice, safe Republican types—not a Reaganite among them.

In short, not the type of people who are going to push you for something dramatic, like firing Dick Darman or embracing one of the really tough growth packages (one GOP staffer complained that you're "still looking for a deal when [you] should be looking for a fight"). You've still got a few of those folks around—Quayle, for example, and Kemp, and I see that even Claytie Yeutter complained that you "prefer accommodation to confrontation with Congress"—but the longer you stick with the budget accord the fewer of them you'll have around. Ed Rollins, the guy who handled Reagan's 1984 campaign, is urging much the same thing, but of course you got rid of him for saying just that.

The point is that if you stick to your guns on the budget package you can steer us back to the kinder, gentler GOP where tax cutting was still voodoo economics and country club was an honorable word. You're halfway there. And I'm rooting for you. But don't tell Jay Leno.

Yours sincerely,
Jimmy □

Amazing Togetherness

BRIAN CROZIER

POTSDAM/BERLIN

THERE we were, where it all began: the Cecilienhof Palace, where Stalin (who knew what he wanted) got the better of the new boys, Harry Truman and Clement Attlee, and the cold war germinated. We were there, in a way, to celebrate the end of it; or, in another way, to take a closer look and see how far we still had to go before the skeptics were convinced that it was indeed all over. Specifically, our theme was the future role of intelligence on both sides of the crumpled Iron Curtain.

Who were "we"? Well, to start at the apex, we had William Colby, former Director of Central Intelligence; Vladimir Rubanov, chief of the newly created Information and Analysis Department of the KGB; and General Oleg Kalugin, former head of KGB counter-intelligence and later a People's Deputy of the USSR.

Joseph Borzotta

We Westerners fielded a strong side. There was Hans Graf Huyn, formerly of the Bundestag and author of works on the Great Divide; "Jupp" Horchem, formerly of the BfV (Germany's FBI); "Jamie" Jameson, formerly the CIA's top Sovietologist; Joel-François Dumont, a French TV executive and specialist on intelligence; and your Contributing Editor, who, among such hard-line skeptics, sometimes sounded like an accommodating softie.

The conference was sponsored by the Washington-based International Freedom Foundation, whose Chairman, Duncan Sellars, presided.

Where, indeed, does the truth lie, so to speak? In the old days of simple certainties, at least we knew where we stood. And now? Each week brings fresh proof that the reality of the KGB and the system it incarnated was even more horrible than some of us had been saying for decades.

The failed Putsch of August 1991 threw everything into still greater turmoil. In ways totally unforeseen by its perpetrators, the *coup manqué* can now be seen as an historic turning point. In the field that concerned us, security and intelligence, it precipitated changes that have yet to settle down into a coherent whole.

In the weeks preceding our conference, Soviet viewers and listeners had been treated to bewildering programs. On September 9, for instance, the newly appointed KGB chief, Vadim Bakatin, was televised in a debate with the leading dissident Vladimir Bukovsky. Bakatin was remarkably open and frank, until Bukovsky raised the taboo topics of Soviet involvement in terrorism and the international drug traffic. Bakatin promptly disclaimed all knowledge of such involvement and then mumbled something about individuals who might have done such things: "People will be people" was how he put it.

On October 24, President (as he still was) Mikhail Gorbachev signed a decree abolishing the KGB and creating new organs to take over some of its functions. Of these the most important are the Inter-Republic Security Service (ISS) and the Central Intelligence Service (CIS). The ISS, headed by Bakatin, took over the functions of the defunct Second Chief Directorate, which ran the vast repressive apparatus of the old regime. Interviewed on October 23, the day before Gorbachev's decree, he claimed that combatting dissidents and disinformation were now "things of the past." Pending proof to the contrary, I am willing to accept the sincerity of half of this pledge: the bit about ending the oppression of the citizenry.

As for the CIS, headed by Yevgeny

Mr. Crozier, an NR *Contributing Editor, is the author of* The Gorbachev Phenomenon.

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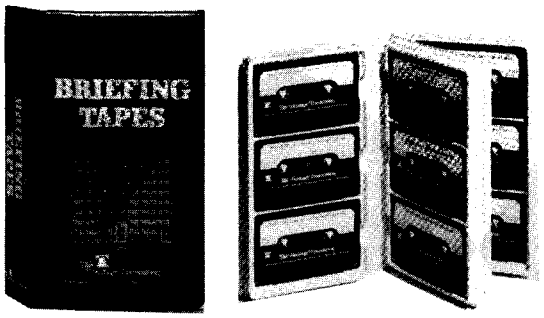

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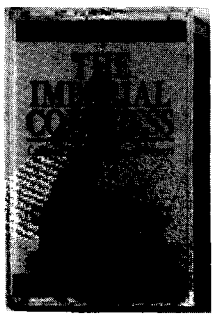

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Primakov, it took over from the old First Chief Directorate, which handled spies and operations abroad. Primakov, an academician and Arabist, is not exactly a reassuring figure. He played an important role in building up Saddam Hussein's security apparatus and in bringing aid and comfort to the Iraqi tyrant during the Gulf War. To judge from an interview he gave on September 30, he expected the old game of stealing Western scientific and technological secrets to go on pretty much as before.

The Soviet participants at Potsdam were well chosen. The senior one, General Kalugin, has already appeared a number of times on Western television. For speaking his mind in public, he was fired a year ago, and lost his pension rights and his medals; however, as a newly elected People's Deputy, he was immune from prosecution. The other one, Vladimir Rubanov, was also sacked for publishing an article without clearance, but he was reinstated in the new ISS headed by Bakatin. Kalugin, who learned his excellent English on the job in the United States, interpreted for his younger colleague. After our meeting, he was reinstated as an "advisor" to Bakatin's service.

Mostly, the two men confirmed the moving picture described above. However, there was a moment of drama when they were challenged by several of our side's experts on the Soviet Union's well documented program for training terrorists. No, they knew nothing about such things.

"What about Carlos, the Jackal?" asked a Western voice. A time warp set in, as Kalugin came out with the standard disinformation of the Seventies: Carlos was in Moscow for his girlfriends, not for training. A chill came over the conference, after the heat of confrontation. I suppose it would have been too much to expect these senior career men to claim to know more than Bakatin owned up to in response to Bukovsky.

That evening, in our Berlin hotel, Colby, Kalugin, Rubanov, and your Contributing Editor had the experience, unprecedented for each of us, of dining together in the company of only one other person, who was there, as it were, *ex officio*: Mrs. Kalugin. Kalugin assured me that it was now perfectly safe for me to come to Moscow. As for the former DCI, he was welcome to stay with the Kalugins. We might, I suppose, put the assurance and the invitation to the test, one day when the snows have melted as the icebergs of the cold war seem to have done.

All this happened "the other day," at a time of deepening paradox: the Soviet threat much diminished (even allowing for those scattered nuclear missiles), but the task of Western security and intelligence services enormously more complicated, with the creation of individual post-KGB republican agencies and with the main Soviet ones still operational.

In this as in so many other spheres, Boris Yeltsin has made life easier for us, by simply taking over the obsolete Soviet secret services for Russia, along with the other remaining props of Gorbachev's vanished power.

President Yeltsin also put in a (somewhat premature) bid for membership in NATO. Again, he is standing History on its head. Old habits die hard, though. Before the Russian Central Intelligence Service lines up on the Western side, there will be a lot of cleaning up to do, and shedding of ingrained habits. For a start, the KGB's "legal" and "illegal" spies will have to be brought home and fired, retired, or diverted to other tasks.

And the past misdeeds will have to be faced, *including* the KGB's involvement in drugs and terrorism. Potsdam showed just how hard it is for some official lies to be *glasnosted*. □

Out of Many, Not Quite One

NOEL MALCOLM

MAASTRICHT

IT WAS one of God's nicer historical ironies to place the conferences of Maastricht and Alma Ata less than two weeks apart. On December 21, in the Kazakh capital, 11 heads of government met and agreed to turn a centralized "Union" into a loose, cooperative association of sovereign states. On December 9, in the Dutch provincial town, 12 heads of government had met to consider a plan to turn their association of sovereign states into something resembling a federal Union.

Under the terms of the draft treaty which awaited their signatures at Maastricht, most of the essential responsibilities of national governments —foreign policy, defense, economic affairs, social legislation, immigration policy—would have passed to supranational European bodies or become subject to majority voting among the member states of the EEC. Each individual country, in other words, would have lost control over its own affairs. The so-called "European Parliament" at Strasbourg would have gained the right to initiate new laws—thus beginning to resemble the legislative component of a European federal government. Add to that a single European currency, a single European citizenship, and the not-so-distant prospect of a single European army, and you have the ingredients for one of the greatest transformations in modern history: the creation of *Homo europensis*, the most exciting thing since *Homo sovieticus* was invented.

A failure to sign this treaty, warned German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, would be "a catastrophe for European development." President Mitterrand was equally apocalyptic: "We do not have the right to stop this process." A refusal to accept the provisions of this treaty "would bring disorder and the end of a great dream"—words curiously similar to those used by President Gorbachev a few weeks later. In the event, the treaty was signed at Maastricht, but with many of its most extreme clauses either cut out or toned down at the insistence of British Prime Minister John Major. To adopt the favorite metaphor of the unionists, the European train did move forward, but more slowly than expected, thanks to a tussle over the emergency brake in the drivers' cab. So preoccupied were the European leaders that they may hardly have noticed the clanking of the third-class cars of the Alma Ata express, as it accelerated past them in the opposite direction.

European federalists are understandably irritated by any comparison between the Soviet Union of the past and their European Union of the fu-

Mr. Malcolm is political correspondent for the London Spectator.

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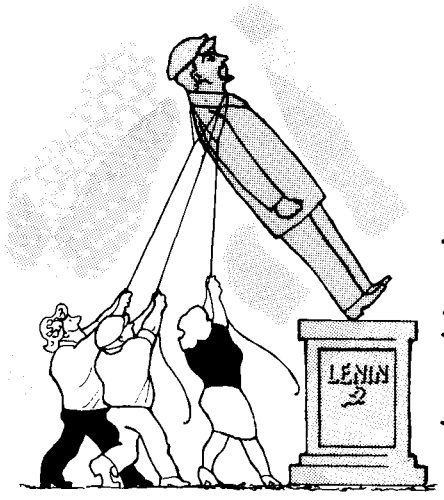

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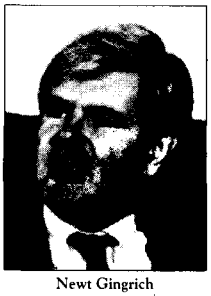
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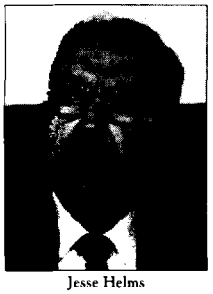
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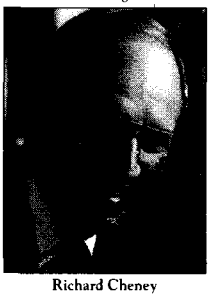
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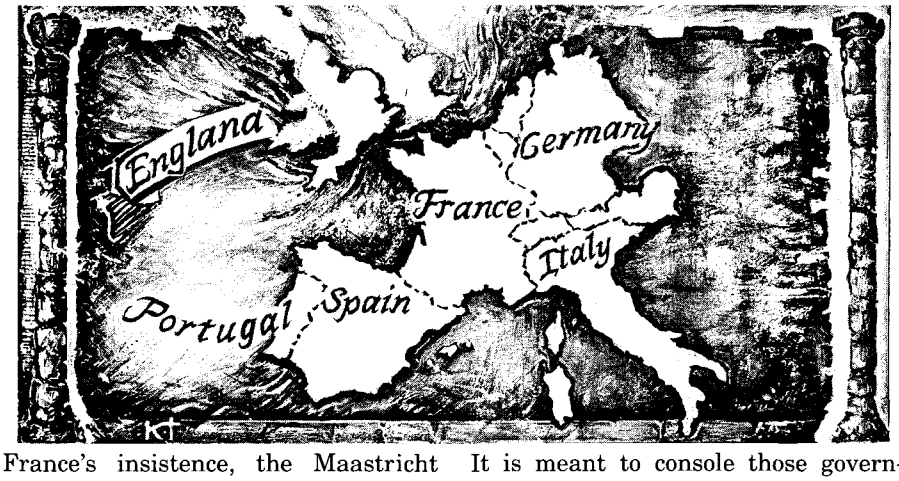
ture. The differences outnumber the similarities, of course; but some of the similarities are too strong to be ignored. Both are—or were—intended as unions of states with separate national identities. This is a recipe for instability and political friction, as the recent history of Yugoslavia, Belgium, and even Canada helps to show. They prefer to talk about the U.S. as the model of a successful federal state; but a truer comparison would be not with the formation of the U.S. two centuries ago, but with what it would be like if the U.S. tried today to form a single federal union with, say, Mexico, Haiti, Bolivia, and Brazil.

Another similarity is the devotion to central economic planning. At France's insistence, the Maastricht treaty includes plans for a Europe-wide "industrial policy," which will promote "co-operation between companies," "the adjustment of industry to structural changes," and new forms of assistance to those industries which face strong international competition. The scope for economic *dirigisme* will be large indeed. Already, to give just one example, thousands of acres of Portuguese farmland have been covered with eucalyptus trees because someone in Brussels decided that the industrial plan for Portugal should include the expansion of its paper-making industry. This is not so very different from what used to go on at Comecon, when it was decided that Czechoslovakia would make more televisions while Bulgaria would grow root vegetables. Under the Maastricht treaty, a new "cohesion fund" will be set up to subsidize the poorer economies of the EEC. It is hard to imagine that the bureaucracy in Brussels will distribute this money without dictating how it should be spent.

The creation of this cohesion fund is a consequence of the most important part of the Maastricht treaty, the decision to embark on an "irreversible" process toward a single European currency. Obviously, the poorest economies will suffer from the removal of that natural market mechanism, currency adjustment, which reacts to the strain of competing against stronger countries such as Germany. At the same time, the imposition of new, Europe-wide "social" rights at work (longer paid holidays, maternity leave, etc.) will raise costs for employers in the poorer economies. The cohesion fund, which was fought for at Maastricht by Spain with the backing of Greece and Portugal, should really have been called the consolation fund. It is meant to console those governments for the harm which will come from pretending that their economies are really on a par with Germany's.



Katherine Trunk

Both the plans for the single currency and the provisions of the "social chapter" were resisted bitterly by John Major. In the end an exception was made for Britain in both cases, with a total opt-out of the social chapter, and an opt-in clause for the currency (allowing the British Parliament at some later date to decide whether it wants to join). Mr. Major's firmness on these points exasperated his negotiating partners, who felt that he was displaying hypocrisy as well as cussedness. "It's the British who are always saying that the European Community should be an economic project, not a political one," complained one senior Dutch official, "and now they're trying to block its economic progress."

It depends what you mean by progress. Britain, under Mrs. Thatcher, did indeed campaign hard for the development of a single free market in Europe. But the principle that "you can't have a single market without a single currency," so constantly repeated by European federalists, involves a rather specialized concept of a market. So too does the principle that you can't have a single market without a single level of production costs for everyone. At Brussels, "single" is taken to mean "uniform": so the phrase "single market" is turning into an oxymoron, with the two words tugging in opposite directions.

John Major is a former finance minister, with a strong commitment to free-market policies. He argued on economic grounds against the social chapter and against the rush to monetary union, and won the concessions he wanted. Yet the long-standing British opposition to these plans is not based on economic calculations alone: it is a matter of political principle too. A single currency is the most powerful tool for the construction of a single state; and European legislation in the workplace would also be a significant new intrusion into the powers of national governments. Opinion polls show that the British people wish to preserve the powers of their national government and national parliament. This is hardly surprising, given that Britain is the only EEC member state whose government has not been overthrown by war, revolution, or coup d'état within living memory.

The hypocrisy in the British position can be found among those Conservative MPs who wish to preserve their constitutional powers, but also want to disown the "stridency" of Mr. Major's predecessor, who never hesitated to talk about the sovereignty of the United Kingdom. Mr. Major makes a point of not using the word "sovereignty." Although he took care to remove the word "federal" from the Maastricht treaty, he did nothing to counter the federalists' claims about the historical inevitability of European unification.

Historical inevitability? The people sitting round that other conference table, at Alma Ata, can tell us all about historical inevitability. They were brought up on it. Last fall, the Latvian foreign minister (who did not even go to Alma Ata) declared: "Latvia is now more independent than Britain." We can only hope that, in decades to come, when a few more EEC conferences have done their work, the Latvians will still insist on recognizing Britain *de jure*. □

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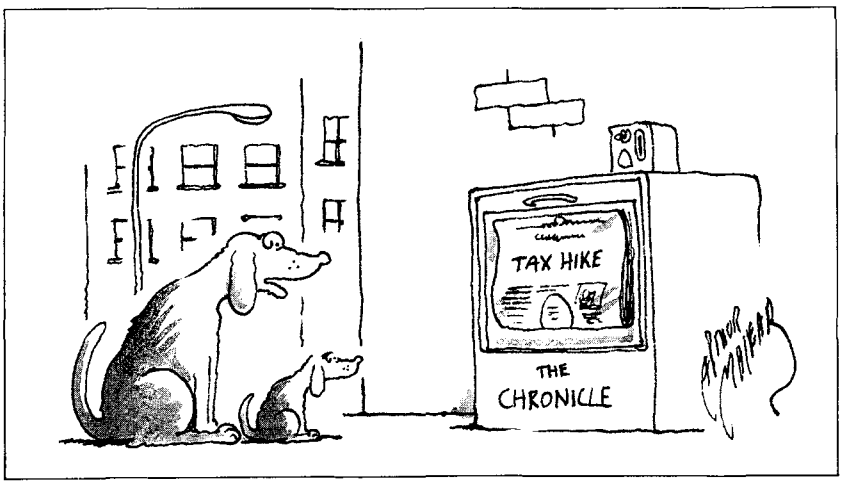


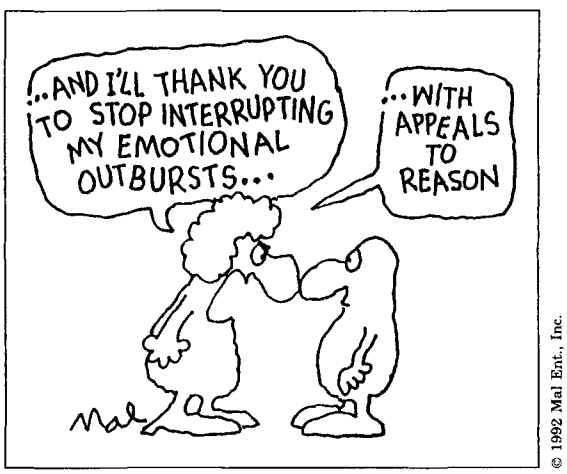
"The newspaper plays a central yet paradoxical role in our life, son. They house-train us with it, we fetch it for them, and then, alas, they swat us with it."

S.O.S.

I leave a message on my friend's machine
(She's never home), and wait to get her call
Until I have to race to where I've been
Or where I'm going (I'm not home at *all*).

She finally leaves a message on my own
Machine, a little edgy, I'd suspect,
And waits until . . . ah, tell us, fiendish phone,
Mad message center, how do we *connect*?

MAUREEN CANNON



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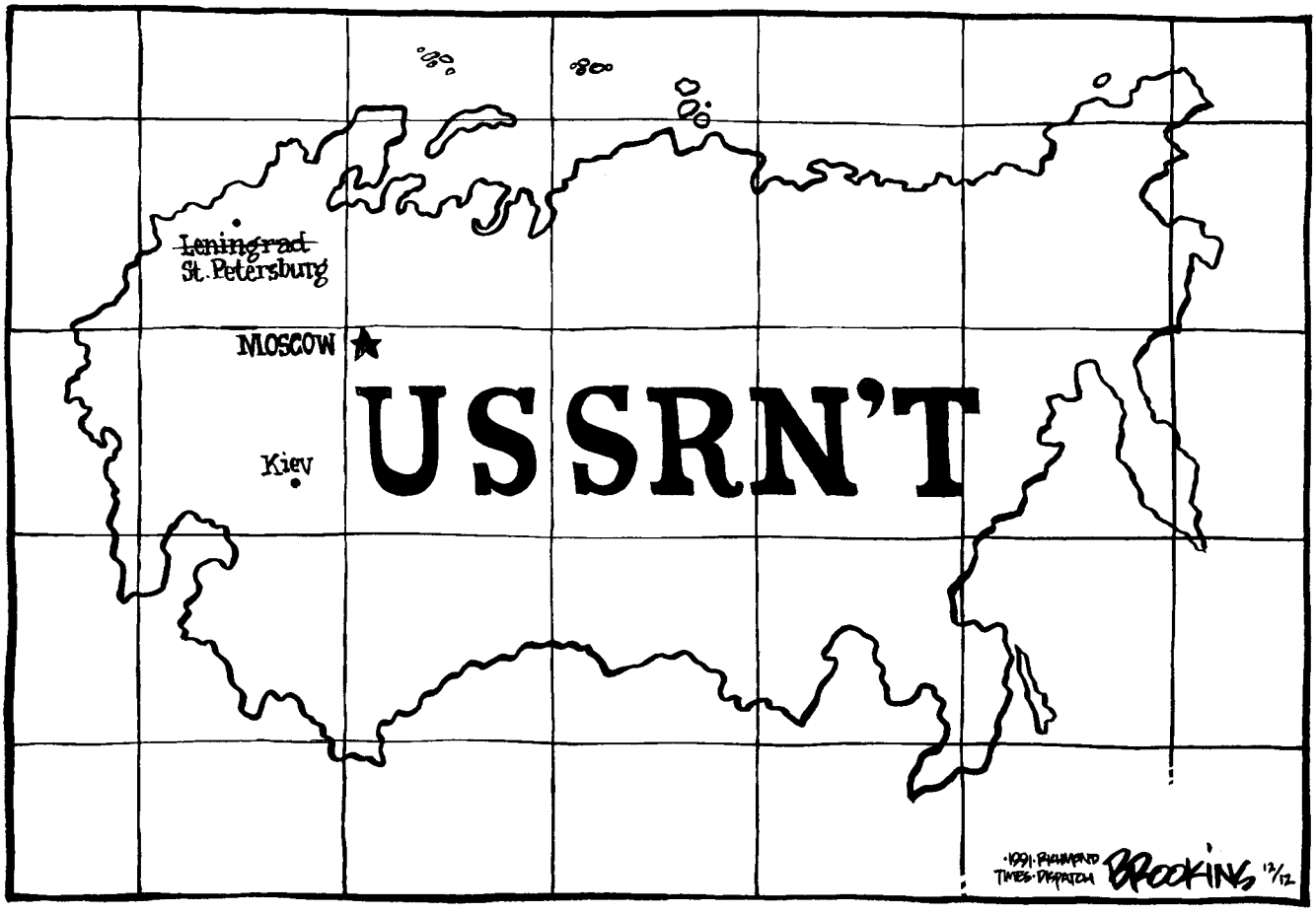
MAYNEED Chicago Tribune
SOMEWHERE IN UPSTATE NEW YORK circa 2116 AD
WHAT KIND OF QUESTION IS THAT? DAY AFTER DAY IT'S THE SAME QUESTION!! DON'T YOU PEOPLE POSSESS EVEN A SCINTILLA OF ORIGINAL THOUGHT?
OATMEAL OR CREAM OF WHEAT, MARIO...MAKE UP YOUR MIND.
THE OLD POLITICIANS' HOME



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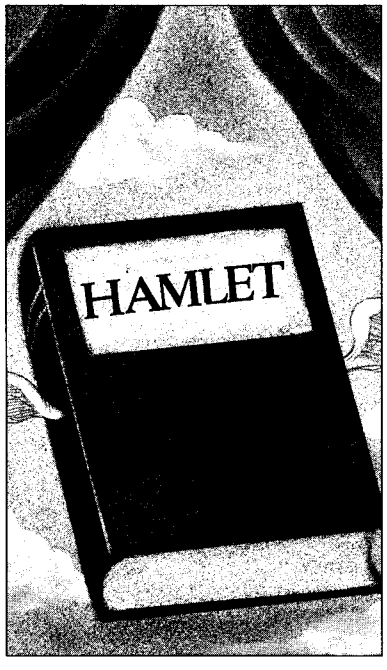

Will Power

HOW SHAKESPEARE CAN SAVE OUR KIDS

The road to illiteracy has been paved by innumerable well intentioned programs—of which the latest is a national curriculum. We don't need a national curriculum, we need a national book.

BARBARA LERNER

LOOKING at American education today is like standing on a narrow little plateau on top of a foothill, with two stark views. Looking down, most of us can now see the final descent that would take us the rest of the way into the land of low-skill, low-wage workers. The latest SAT results show us a little closer to the edge: our national average on the verbal half of the test, reported annually since 1952, hit a new low in 1991.

Looking up, we see a steep, intimidating cliff. We know we must scale it to avert a further fall, must, somehow, get American students back up to the internationally competitive heights, but we disagree, sharply, about how to get them to make that climb.

Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander and his intellectual allies—Diane Ravitch, Chester Finn Jr., and E. D. Hirsch Jr.—are convinced that American students are stuck where they are because our schools aren't teaching them the *informational content* they need to make the climb. They sincerely believe that all American kids can do it, if they get the information they need in school; that is why they are fighting so hard to impose a single, comprehensive national curriculum on all American schools.

Their most vociferous critics are usually referred to as multiculturalists, but Nathan Glazer is right to argue, as he did in the September 2, 1991, *New Republic*, that "were it not for the pattern of poor achievement among blacks in the schools, the multicultural movement would lose much of its force." He is right, too, to characterize the fight for an Afrocentric curriculum as "another desperate try to help black high-school achievement."

Glazer himself is too sophisticated to believe this "desperate try" will actually improve black test scores. He understands that it is just another variant on the old idea that raising students' self-esteem will raise their achievement levels, an idea that has been dominant in American education since the 1950s and is largely responsible for the decline that brought us to our present pass. He has, nonetheless, chosen to throw his weight behind it, not only in the pages of *The New Republic*, but as a member of the Sobol committee on curriculum reform in New York, and as the most widely respected white defender of its final report.

Counsel of Despair

MANY longtime admirers find Glazer's position incomprehensible, but I think it makes a deal of sorry sense, once you grasp the implicit premise. It is that black kids are hopeless losers and, since nothing will change that, it is pointless to fight to improve their schooling as the Alexandrites are doing. Pointless to be moved and angered, as Midge Decter was in the September 1991 *Commentary*, to see "little black kids . . . used as ideological cannon fodder." Glazerites see these people as naïve; the realistic move, as they see it, is to deflect black anger by letting the proponents of Afrocentrism take complete control of black education. Cutting the ground out from under black educators who do not believe that Afrocentrism is the answer, and putting alternative views beyond the reach of a whole generation of black kids—those are small prices to pay if you're convinced, *a priori*, that nothing else will help either.

I think the Alexandrites are profoundly right to reject this cynical counsel—there is strong evidence that black students can do better, much better, and do it quickly, evidence that I reviewed in the March 1991 *Commentary*—but I think they are tragically mistaken

Miss Lerner, a psychologist, attorney, and policy consultant, is working on a book on education reform.

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in seeing information as the key. Faith in the power of information per se is the distinguishing mark of the Alexandrite intellectuals. It explains why they feel compelled to try to control the entire curriculum at the national level. Alexandrites plan to exert that control through a series of newly devised national content tests, tests of specific, detailed information in six subjects: English, math, science, history, civics, and geography. If they succeed in implementing this plan, all our students will be tested in all six subjects in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades, eighteen tests in all.

This plan is so comprehensive that it leaves little room for any other content, a fact that puts the Alexandrites at odds not just with multiculturalists, Afrocentrists, and other critics on the Left, but also with classicists and fundamentalists and diverse others from the educational Right. Many of these groups, North and South, groups that want to reintroduce Greek and Latin as much as those that want to focus on the ancient dramas of Egypt and the Middle East and the role of black actors in them, are not likely to be mollified by even a liberally inclusive national curriculum of the sort the Alexandrites envision. They want room to teach something different, and a comprehensive national curriculum doesn't leave them any.

This octupus-control aspect of a national curriculum also puts the Alexandrites at odds with two other very powerful groups: public-school teachers and their unions, and school-choice proponents who want government funding for private schools. The Alexandrites expected opposition from teachers—a system of national control as extensive as this would operate to micromanage their classrooms, interfering with their professional autonomy. The surprise was the hostility of many pro-choice private-school advocates. Alexandrites did not expect that, because their overall education-reform plan includes a far-reaching school-choice component. The problem, as astute choice proponents like Lawrence Uzzell were quick to point out, is that Alexander's national-curriculum plan would obviate meaningful choice by imposing a hitherto unheard-of degree of uniformity on all American schools, private as well as public.

Recovering True Diversity

I AM A CRITIC TOO, and my opposition has two main roots. First, I sympathize with all the critics mentioned above, even those I disagree with most, because I believe, deeply, in the value of diversity—not "political correctness," which is simply another kind of imposed, top-down uniformity, but the genuine diversity that evolves out of and reflects the enormous heterogeneity of the American people. That kind of diversity has been our strength in the past, and I believe it will work for us again if we give it a chance. That means not overreaching, not trying to control anything we don't need to control at the federal level, but being very sure we do control what *must* be controlled, if we are to stay competitive as a nation, stay together, and give all American kids a real shot at a viable future.

A comprehensive, information-based national curriculum would destroy that diversity, wiping out the stubborn, disorderly uniqueness that has been the hallmark of American education throughout our history. It would make us, at least on the surface, more like our Western European and East Asian competitors, countries in which centralized control and curricular uniformity have always been the norm. Alexandrites think that is one of the secrets of their success, and hope to duplicate it here. I think they are mistaken; Eurasian curricular uniformity, where it exists, has organic roots in a population homogeneity that does not exist here. The idea of a national curriculum is a transplant; I do not think it will bear fruit, certainly not the same fruit, on American soil.

A comprehensive, information-based national curriculum would destroy the stubborn, disorderly uniqueness that has been the hallmark of American education.

This is one major reason for my opposition; but I have another, even more basic reason. I reject a national curriculum because I am in profound *agreement* with what I understand to be the three fundamental goals of the Alexandrite intellectuals, and I am convinced that their national curriculum will not really advance any of them. I think it will fail, in the same way that the reforms these same people pushed through in the 1980s —mainly a whole slew of newly required courses— failed to reverse the overall decline in our national test scores. Right goals, wrong means: that's the story of the 1980s; we dare not repeat it in the 1990s.

In talking about shared national goals here, I'm not referring to any of the official lists of national goals that official government commissions have been showering us with lately; I'm talking about fundamentals, about the three essential things we need to survive and flourish. First, and most obviously, we need to make our young people smart enough to hold their own in competition with their European and Asian counterparts. Second, we need to give them all some kind of a common bond, enough of one to prevent social fragmentation. Third, we need to make equal opportunity more than an ideological flag to fight over; we need to make it a reality in a lot of inner-city schools where it isn't today.

Alexandrite intellectuals are committed to all three of these goals, and they believe that a national curriculum will further them because they see information as the key. Information is the basic building block in their theory of intellectual development. They are convinced that more of it will make us smarter, and their idea of

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"more" is a basically horizontal one, focusing on breadth of coverage, not on vertical elements like height and depth and intensity. That's their focus when they think about raising American intelligence, and it does not shift when they think about social cohesion and equality. Here, too, they count on information, on what Mr. Hirsch calls "the piling up of specific, communally shared information," to bring us together and narrow the gaps between groups.

That faith in the power of information per se is spelled out with admirable clarity in Mr. Hirsch's best-seller, *Cultural Literacy*. In it, he describes his theory of education as an anthropological one, "because it is based on the anthropological observation that all human communities are founded upon specific shared information." Mrs. Ravitch and Mr. Finn hold similar views: lists of specific items of information American kids don't know at various ages are recurrent features of many of their books; but Mr. Hirsch's slim volume is especially interesting because he bravely offers a complete list, presented in a 63-page appendix, of the items of information they need to know in order to achieve what he calls "cultural literacy." And when he says *information*, he means just that—*information*, not books or texts, or the experience of reading them:

> the idea of cultural literacy has been attacked by some liberals on the assumption that I must be advocating a list of great books that every child in the land should be forced to read. But those who examine the appendix . . . will be able to judge for themselves how thoroughly mistaken such an assumption is. Very few specific titles appear on the list, and they usually appear as words, not works, because *they represent writings that culturally literate people have read about but haven't read.* [Emphasis supplied.]

I disagree. I am no Deweyite; I do not share Dewey's contempt for information; but I do not think it can bear the theoretical weight the Alexandrites place on it. I want to offer a contrasting definition of culture. An old Digger Indian chief gave it to the godmother of American anthropology, Ruth Benedict, in the 1920s:

In the beginning, God gave to every people a cup,
a cup of clay,
And from this cup they drank their life.
They all dipped in the water,
but their cups were different.
Our cup is broken now.

I think that brief, brilliant definition captures essential truths that the Alexandrite answer misses. Culture is something more than shared information, something more and different, an experiential thing that no purely rationalistic notion can encompass. I think that is true in any human world, and poignantly so in ours, a world in which we are all drenched in information all the time, an overwhelming, unassimilable outpouring of it. It is part of the water of modern life, or perhaps a film on it, but it is not the cup that shapes it. The old man was not mourning lost information; he was mourning lost cross-generational meaning, lost power to shape experience for his descendants in ways that would bind them together, connecting them to a common past and pointing them toward a common future.

We risk the same loss, but we have an advantage the Digger Indians didn't have. Ours is a literate culture, and part of its shaping power is preserved in its seminal texts. Reading those texts exposes us to it, and is itself a shared experience with great shaping potential. To harness that potential, I think we need a national book—not a list of great books, but a single national book—in place of a national curriculum. I believe that a single national book, in concert with the neutral skills tests I recommended in the March 1991 *Commentary*, will do much more than a national curriculum to advance all three of our common goals, and do it without any serious damage to American diversity.

A National Book

THE IDEA is a simple one, easy to implement. It can co-exist with any curriculum any community chooses to adopt. Deep, not wide, it leaves plenty of room for other content. Here's the plan.

First, choose one book, a single national book, and require every high-school student in America to read and reread it, at least in part, every semester, through all four years of high school. Require them to read the actual text—not a simplified version of it, and not other books or articles about it, but the book itself, the full-blooded, unexpurgated text. Make sure it is a difficult and complex book, a book they will all have to struggle with, long and hard, first to comprehend at all, then to begin to grasp in any depth. Make sure, too, that it is a seminal book, rich enough and deep enough to reward all those years of sustained effort. Make it an old book, one that has moved and fascinated millions over centuries, and has a special place in the American imagination. Shakespeare, for instance—his plays would, I think, be the best choice, for reasons I'll sketch later.

Next, make sure that every American student is told in grade school, as early as possible, that in high school, he will have to read Shakespeare, at least one play a semester, every semester, and that to graduate, he will have to pass a national test based on one of those plays. Let grade-school kids hold the national book in their hands and look at its pages to get some concrete sense of the standard they are working toward. Tell them that it is a really hard standard to meet because it is a really high one, but that they can and will meet it. Tell them that it takes years of hard work, endless hours of practice, to learn to read and understand even a part of the national book; the same kind of sustained hard work and practice it takes to get really good at basketball or tennis or the clarinet. Reassure them that it is not an impossible standard, and that they will get lots of help along the way. Tell them that their national Shakespeare test will cover only one play, and they will each get to choose which one.

Finally, make sure that their teachers have the freedom and flexibility to tailor their instruction to fit the needs of each group of students. There should be no

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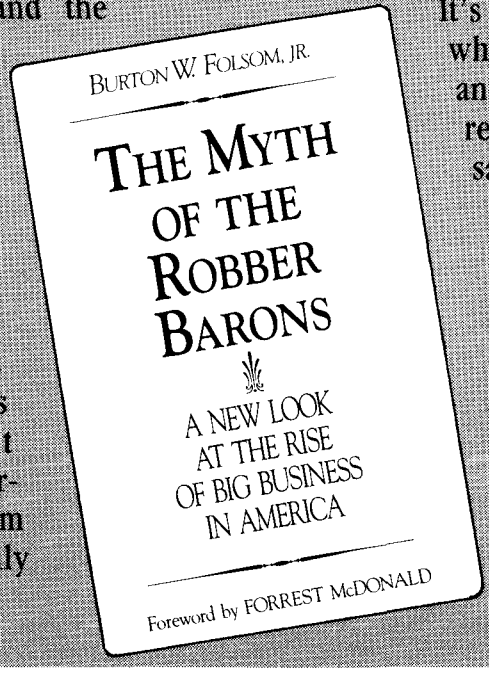
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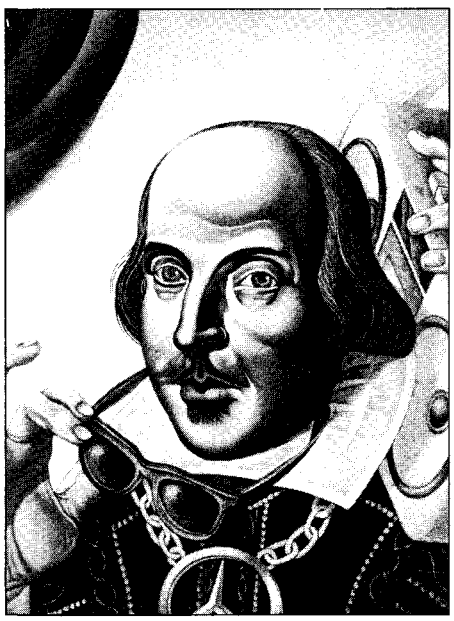
classroom micromanagement from afar, no required number of plays, no required order to teach them in. Some teachers, working with some groups of students, might choose to cover many different plays over the four-year period. Others, working with different students in different circumstances, might think it best to focus on a single play, encouraging their students to re-read and re-think the same time-weathered words every semester, year after year, watching their meanings grow and change as they do. That is a valuable experience, and in the hurried, throw-away atmosphere of modern life, many American kids don't get anything like it. Teachers who decide to provide it will not have to worry that their students will be disadvantaged on the national Shakespeare test. They won't be, because it will be designed to measure depth of understanding, not breadth of knowledge. The point is that lack of depth is the central failure of American education, the reason why our kids do so poorly in international competition and why the reforms of the 1980s, the mile-wide, inch-deep reforms instituted in the wake of the 1983 Excellence Commission Report, did so little to change that. I believe a national-book requirement can give us depth, and I believe its adoption would take us a long way toward achieving our three top goals: making our kids smarter, more equal, and more cohesive.


Chang Park

What Our Students Need

LET'S LOOK at smartness first, the kind of smartness we need to compete with students in Japan, Singapore, and Hong Kong, who are now as much as two standard deviations ahead of us on international tests; with those in England, France, and Germany, who surpass us by almost as much; and with those in less developed countries like Thailand, who are pulling abreast and beginning to pull ahead of us. To understand why our kids are so far behind, you have to look beyond test names and test-maker claims, and grasp the fact that, at bottom, all the tests that matter are tests of abstract reasoning ability with words and with numbers.

Some, like math and reading comprehension tests, measure those abilities alone. Any specific factual information you need to answer the questions is given to you in the questions themselves; if your vocabulary is adequate to let you understand the questions, reasoning power alone will give you the answers. These are the *neutral, all-purpose skill tests*, like the SAT and its counterparts in business and the military, the GATB and ASVAB. Other tests, referred to in the trade as *content tests*, measure those same abilities, but also require specific knowledge in particular fields, previously learned information about science or literature or history. That confuses many people. They think our kids are falling short because they haven't learned the specific information they need to answer the questions. Often, all too often, they haven't, but the problem is much deeper than that. Two lines of evidence make that conclusion inescapable. First, our kids don't do any better on the neutral skills tests than they do on the content tests. Second, our kids fail, repeatedly, on content test after content test, even when they *do* have the information they need.

They fail because they can't put the information together and make it work for them, and no wonder. Information alone is an inert mass; reasoning ability is the yeast in the dough. It is reason, abstract reason, that makes connections between items of information, sees relationships, categorizes and organizes and reorganizes until the information makes sense, then takes it all apart and puts it back together again a different way, to see if it will make more or better or different sense.

It is an abstract power, abstract and universal in its applicability, and it takes two main forms: verbal reasoning power and mathematical reasoning power. There is a critical pedagogical difference between them. Mathematical reasoning power is quite straightforward: most people acknowledge its universality and recognize that you develop it by doing mathematics, pressing on to more and more complex problem-solving at higher and higher levels. Verbal reasoning power is different; its universality is not as obvious because there is a paradox at its heart. It is an abstract skill that cannot be developed in the abstract. It can only be developed by delving deeply into some subject matter.

What subject matter? For this purpose and this purpose alone, the development of intellectual power per se, anything will do, any subject matter at all, as long as it is conveyed by written materials of sufficient complexity. For this purpose, Cervantes or Marx will do as well as Shakespeare or Madison. Hitler may not have written at a high enough level of complexity; Heidegger certainly did. So did Charles Maurras, and for all I know the Ayatollah Khomeini may have, too. It is a truly, indeed a terrifyingly, *neutral* standard—it is, after all, *smartness* we are talking about, not wisdom or goodness—but it is a standard our kids must meet, if we are to keep pace in the twenty-first century.

The power to meet this standard, to reason well enough to read and comprehend complex written material in some depth, is what our kids lack. This power is sometimes called intelligence, and when it is, many otherwise sensible people get so frightened and defensive that they run away, hiding inside a veritable for-

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tress of irrelevant nineteenth-century science. It's not only laymen who are imprisoned in this fortress of fear; many experts are hiding there too. If they can summon the courage to look out a lancet and get a wider view, they might see how kids in other countries develop this not so mysterious power.

They develop it in the way peoples all over the world have always done: by reading and re-reading at least one complex book. That's the key, and our students can't grasp it, can't even get into the mental gym to practice, if all the books they read are on the complexity level of a grocery list. That's the purpose of the national Shakespeare requirement in this context: it is aimed at making all American students smarter by guaranteeing every one of them sustained exposure to at least one really complex book. Students who achieve some real comprehension of the national book will have learned much more than a magical play or two. They will have developed a power they need to succeed in life, and to keep America successful, the power to read and comprehend anything that can be conveyed by words alone.

E Pluribus Unum

CAN inner-city black kids do that, too? Why not? Their forebears learned to read, many of them, by reading the Bible, not exactly an easy or a shallow book either.

Some of them are reading it still; the Bible is and always has been America's *un*official national book. It is, after all, the grand old two-volume primer of Western Civilization, and the first European ships to touch these shores all carried it. Its images and ideas are part of the mental baggage of every European immigrant, and of all the Hispanic ones, too. Immigrants from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East may or may not bring it with them, but all who stay will feel its shaping power, sooner or later; the Judaeo-Christian tradition is a pervasive presence in American society, and always has been. Reading its basic book, the Bible, makes many of us smarter than we would otherwise be, and gives us a core of common culture, but it divides us, too, and always has done.

Happily for us, our Founding Fathers gave us a powerful shield to protect us from the worst consequences of those divisions. It is, of course, the First Amendment, and it is the reason why our *un*official national book is officially, constitutionally, *un*official, and needs to stay that way. For an *official* national book, a book we can make required reading in every school in the land, we need a secular book, a book that does not remind us, however respectfully, of our differences, but focuses us instead on the three fundamental things we all share: *the English language, our common humanity, and the unique rights granted to each of us by the Constitution.* I think Shakespeare will help, more than any other single book, to strengthen American students' common bonds even as it sharpens their wits.

Let's start with English, and ponder the role of a common language in national cohesion. Americans, I think, tend to underestimate the divisive potential of linguistic differences, and of ethnic identities rooted in them. Our own history taught us many hard lessons about the divisive potential of racial and religious differences but, with the exception of the period between the two world wars, the *Myers* v. *Nebraska* era, gave us no comparable lessons in language-linked xenophobia, nothing that makes it easy for us to fully grasp the deadly power of the centrifugal forces still swirling in the Balkans, or the passions astir in the Baltics. Of course, a shared mother tongue is no guarantee of national unity—Northern Ireland springs to mind—but the absence of one does seem to produce, at the very least, a certain vulnerability.

To get a sense of the bonding power of language, it helps to start by recognizing that one strand of it has to do with rhythms and colors, with how and when you breathe, and what it sounds and feels like when it soars or sinks or says good morning, on good mornings and bad ones. It is a kind of elemental, sensory background music, and it shifts with the setting: the sounds of home, the beat and accents of the streets, of the schools you go to and the books you read. This sensuous element is different for every generation, because slang is always a part of it, and slang is the language of the present moment. But it also connects us to the past, to our own histories and our nation's, expanding the range of what we can hear and feel and think and be.

Shakespeare's language does all that and more, but there is no getting around the fact that it is hard as hell for students to grasp. I think that's all to the good. The difficulty of Elizabethan English is a necessary, realistic difficulty, because climbing the threshold of the present into the past is difficult. It is a foreign country we must make our own, and to do that, we must learn its language, and it is seriously misleading to pretend that's an easy thing to do. That sort of pretense—that intrinsically difficult things are or should be effortless—is pervasive in American education today, and, although often well intentioned, it is extremely destructive. Because of it, millions of American students leave school without ever even learning that there are thresholds to be crossed. With Shakespeare, the threshold is thrown into sharp relief, and the required graduation test would make it impossible to ignore.

Kids who make that effort and cross that threshold with Shakespeare will own the English language in a way very few of them own it today. They will find it is not only a powerful analytic tool but a beautiful one, too, one that can convey feelings and images as well as ideas, hot particulars as well as cool abstractions. It will give them experience with an English that is different from the kind they speak, and, out of it, some intuitive sense of the fact that when language is different, life is too.

Giving all our students a common language, and making it a rich and subtle one, doesn't guarantee that they will understand one another, or even recognize their common humanity, but it does, at least, make it a little easier, a little more likely. So, too, does the

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time-defying humanity of Shakespeare's characters, and his ability to expose their hearts right down to the universal core, giving us a clearer view of the people who surround us today, and of ourselves, the self with wings and the self with warts, and the complicated, maddening, fascinating interplay between them.

For all his distance, Shakespeare is very close, and most students who spend four years with him will feel that closeness, sooner or later. The few who don't, who can't respond, even once, out of their own experience to a single Shakespeare character, are students who cannot connect, period. They don't need a different, more "relevant" book; they need a different, more human life, and books alone cannot give it to them. For them, we must try to do more, much more. For the rest, the vast majority, I think that with a national Shakespeare requirement, we could look forward to overhearing a new ice-breaker in the old mating dance. Instead of "What's your astrological sign?" American teens will be asking each other "Which play is yours?" That, too, is all to the good, because it's a better question. Asking and answering it, they will learn more useful and interesting things about each other, and about themselves.

They will learn interesting and useful things about America too, because the best thing about us—the legal and political system that allows us to absorb more immigrants than any other nation on earth and still maintain a cohesive democracy—is an outgrowth of the English system, and can't be understood without some feel for the English soil from which it grew. At this point, I imagine some readers are scratching their heads at what must seem, at best, a peculiar piece of indirection and/or Anglophilia. If, after all, the basic idea is to give all American kids an appreciation of the unique rights granted to them by the Constitution, why not just make the Constitution itself, along with the Federalist Papers, national book number two? The connection of Hamilton, Madison, and Jay to our constitutional rights is certainly a lot more straightforward, their use of language is also admirable, albeit in different ways, and they have the not inconsiderable merit, for authors of an American national book, of being Americans.

Initially, those arguments struck me as compelling, and I planned to recommend requiring both. I decided, finally, that that would not really serve the purpose. National cohesion is, after all, a matter of emotional attachments more than it is a question of rational choices, and making *all* American teenagers read and reread the Constitution and the Federalist Papers for four years is not likely to foster either kind of bond.

The problem, I think, is that to understand and appreciate the Federalist Papers, it's not enough to have the sort of experience everyone has, at least in part, simply by virtue of being human, and having a human heart. Something more is required, some experience with state power in the wider world, some sense of the workings of large-scale human organizations, and of political possibilities and their human consequences. Few people really have that kind of experiential background early in their lives, and for those who don't, the Federalist Papers provide no overt poetry, no obvious drama, to bring their abstractions to vivid life. Besides, it is better, I think, to preserve the stark simplicity of the national-book idea, and not risk reducing it to just one more item on another numbing checklist of bureaucratic requirements.

One Thing More

BUT A NATIONAL BOOK by itself will not make us equal: something more is needed. This has nothing to do with the way inner-city kids in general, and black kids in particular, respond to Shakespeare. Marva Collins wasn't lying when she said her students—inner-city black kids from Chicago's Westside—loved him. It helped, of course, that their teacher loved him too, but a national Shakespeare requirement would help even students whose teachers hate him.

Given half a chance, Shakespeare can and will speak for himself. Mrs. Collins's students got the message, and the music, using the printed text alone; with a national Shakespeare requirement in place, every American kid who has access to television and movies will have access to a lot of other potential Shakespeare teachers from far beyond his own school, access to the kind of teachers who gave Shakespeare to the world in the first place—actors, first and foremost, but musicians, too, and jugglers and swordsmen and dancers and clowns.

Will American kids watch and listen? Sure they will. Knowing that they will all have to pass a test on "this stuff" to graduate from high school will make Shakespeare a part of their culture—American teenage culture—like it or not. That will draw most of them to it, and make them pay attention, and the old man himself will do the rest. He is, after all, a master at drawing diverse audiences together, a proven winner, from the sixteenth century on, at bridging a gap between the rich and the poor.

Poverty is one thing; terror another. It creates a chasm even Shakespeare cannot bridge, and it is the main reason why a national book isn't enough to make us equal. Too many American schools are ruled by it, and too many of them are inner-city schools, schools that fail to offer minority kids and their teachers effective protection from the bullies who terrorize them.

Safety comes first, of necessity. Talk of a common culture rings hollow in the ears of children who are immersed against their wills in a culture of violence and cannot escape from it even in school. They perceive it as phony talk, empty and hypocritical, and they are right. Safe schools, and safe passage to and from them, is the minimum baseline on which a common culture can be built. A state that does not provide it, and is not making an all-out effort to do so, does not deserve the allegiance of its children and is not likely to get it, no matter what contrary lessons it tries to teach in its schools. □

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Au Revoir, Priscilla

LIKE everything else she did in her 36 years' service at NATIONAL REVIEW, Priscilla Buckley arranged her departure so as to cause the least possible difficulty for her comrades in arms. "Retirement in stages" is the way William Rusher described it: in 1985, at the time of *NR*'s 30th Anniversary, Priscilla semi-retired, stepping down as Managing Editor; after giving her colleagues six years to absorb the shock, she is now pulling out of day-to-day editorial work. Her first project in seven-eighths retirement will be to produce an *NR Reader*.

Herewith, scenes from a 70th-birthday-*cum*-retirement party at the Union League Club in New York.

Above: Richard John Neuhaus, WAR listen in as WFB tells PLB: "Now, Pitts, your second *'retirement' project . . ."*

Below: Priscilla surrounded by a few dozen of her friends, including Monsignor Eugene Clark, Joe Sobran, Evan Galbraith, Rick Brookhiser.

Photographs by Jan Lukas

PLB: "It seems just yesterday, not 48 years ago, that Bobby and Lee and Maggie and I would walk forty or fifty blocks to work—not for physical fitness, but to save the nickel fare on the Third Avenue El. Talk about living below the poverty level! But our hearts were young and gay; the world was our oyster; we were honest-to-God newspaper people covering the greatest story of our generation, World War II. What could a 22-year-old want more than that? And what could a 70-year-old want more than this? God bless you all."

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Left: Priscilla at her fortieth birthday party, 37 million NR *words ago.*

Right: Buckley sœur et frère, exchanging a last official joke.

Below: In foreground: Gertrude Vogt, Bill Buckley, Ernestine Stodelle, John Chamberlain, Pat Buckley; in background: the Whiffenpoofs, prepared to serenade—as Priscilla gives her *version of the last 36 years.*

Right: Priscilla with Ronald Reagan at NR*'s 30th. RR: "That Priscilla has come through all this with a reputation unchallenged for journalistic skill and professionalism, as well as the sweetest disposition on the Eastern Seaboard, is testimony to her work and to her life."*

WAR: "There is an illusion around town that Bill Buckley, all those years, put out NATIONAL REVIEW magazine. This is a *canard*. He had a great deal to do with the magazine, I won't deny that. . . . *But*—all that has nothing to do with putting it out. That was done by the lady we are here to honor tonight, as our Managing Editor for all those many years, and believe me when I say that in the truest sense of the word Priscilla put out NATIONAL REVIEW magazine. She determined the size of every issue, she determined the placement of everything, she determined the general look of the magazine—except the covers: I exempt her from that; Bill Buckley took a *personal* interest in the covers. She managed the editorial staff; she vetted all articles that were submitted as serious presentations and chose those that would be passed on to Bill for final decision and approval, and she okayed the entire final product. So we are honoring not only Priscilla tonight, but in a serious way her great achievement with this magazine."

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Election 1992

WAITING FOR RIGHTY

Pat Buchanan is on the prowl for sparring partners, and he is finding them, left and right: ACT-UP demonstrators, immigrants, fellow conservatives, Japanese manufacturers—and above all, George Bush.

RICHARD BROOKHISER

WE SAT along the walls of the hotel room in Manchester, New Hampshire, thirty members of the national press corps, looking for all the world like an Irish wake, except we weren't having any fun. That changed when Patrick Buchanan, who was about to announce his campaign for the Presidency, joined us. Some Buchanan-watchers have complained that he began pulling in sail as soon as he stopped being a pundit windjammer. (This view is especially common among his enemies, who seem to want him to devote all his speeches to Treblinka.) That is the wrong way to look at him, though. Compared to Buchanan the columnist, Buchanan the candidate is a cautious fellow. Compared to Paul Tsongas, he clips along just fine. Buchanan wore a white shirt and navy blue suit, the sharp part and tightly combed hair of the Fifties, his decade, and his characteristic look, which he owes to the lines of his forehead, of perpetual worry.

One of the things he wasn't worried about was picking a fight within the GOP. "I haven't factionalized my party," he told us, "George Bush has. . . . I'm challenging the President of my party because he's abandoned the principles of his party." The last straw, he said, was the Administration's compromise on the quota bill in October. "I said, I've had it. I don't want five more years of being negative." Then "Thornburgh got waxed." So Cincinnatus left the sound stage.

Buchanan thought seriously of running against Bush once before, in January of 1987. He pulled back because he feared splitting the Right with Jack Kemp. Still, the thought lingered. "If you compare yourself with the men who have sat in the Oval Office, it's absurd. If you compare yourself with the men running, it looks attractive."

We tried to get him to say he was laying the groundwork for 1996, but he wouldn't play along, citing instead the fates of Estes Kefauver and Eugene McCarthy, challengers to incumbents who were superseded by other challengers. He also dismissed the question of whether he was trying to take over the conservative movement by saying that it was already behind him. "My arguments appeal to the Indians," other conservatives' arguments "appeal to the chiefs."

Buchanan acknowledged that his candidacy might toughen George Bush, intellectually and personally. "When George Bush looks into the abyss," he said shrewdly, "he finds reserves." But he insisted that he was in this fight to the finish. "I don't want to be seventy years old and say, It was lying there, you ducked a championship fight with the President of the United States."

Buchanan explained what he would be fighting for in his formal announcement in Concord, the state capital, the next day. The venue was the Hall of Flags of the State Legislative Office Building. Buchanan faced a painting of some white-stockinged eighteenth-century statesman, and a small mob of political allies, cameramen, and reporters. Even some normal New Hampshireites had managed to thrust their way in. Buchanan admits in his memoirs, *Right from the Beginning*, that he has disliked public speaking since grade school. Years of television seem not to have made him like it any better. When a demonstrator from ACT-UP began bellowing and Buchanan quipped that the aides hustling the fellow out of the room should "be gentle with him," it was his only moment of ease. He did not have to give an artful reading, though; the text spoke plainly for itself.

New World Disorder

EARLY reports suggested that Buchanan would center his New Hampshire campaign on taxes and spending. Early reports were mistaken. He led squarely with foreign affairs. The collapse of Communism has brought, not the end of history, but a new world, propelled by nationalism. The internal danger America faces in this new era is the illusion that nationalism has been tran-

Mr. Brookhiser, an NR *Senior Editor, is a columnist for the* New York Observer.

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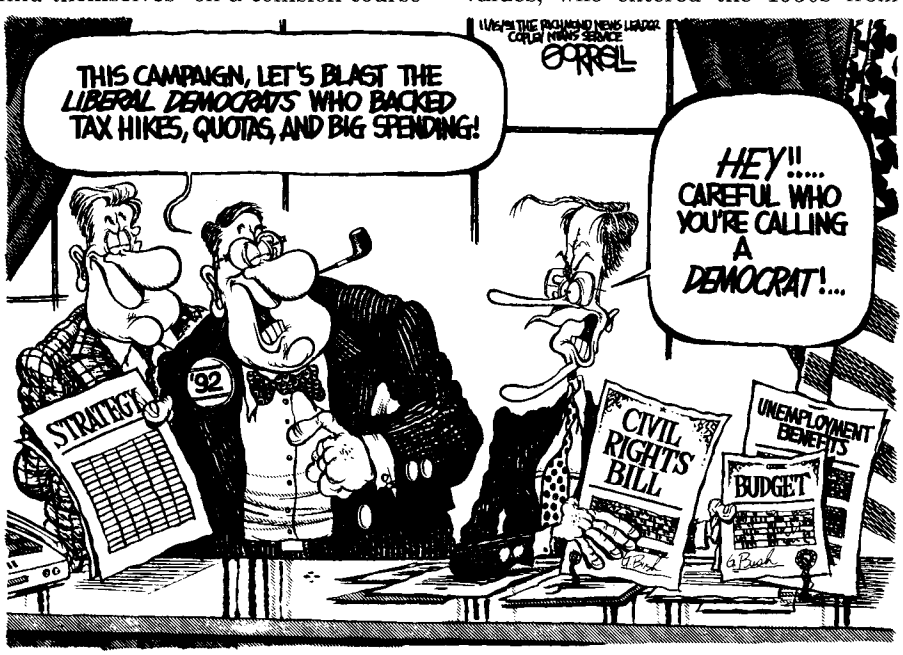
scended: "We must not trade in our sovereignty for a cushioned seat at the head table of anybody's New World Order." An external danger is the activity of nations that know the score. "The rising economic power of Japan has filed a claim to displace the United States as dominant power." Cold-war institutions must be revamped to take account of the new realities: Should the United States "defend rich and prosperous allies" who "invade our markets"?

The first domestic issue he turned to was the "social catastrophe" of the welfare state, in which he included low school test scores, violent crimes, drugs, and a popular culture "as polluted as Lake Erie." The economy came third, with a call to lighten—"not add to, Mr. President"—the business tax burden. But Japan and friends returned here, as "predatory traders of Europe or Asia," who will find themselves "on a collision course"


THIS CAMPAIGN, LET'S BLAST THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS WHO BACKED TAX HIKES, QUOTAS, AND BIG SPENDING!
HEY!! ..... CAREFUL WHO YOU'RE CALLING A DEMOCRAT!...
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with President Buchanan. Cheers from the crowd, and a cry of *About time!*

Buchanan ended with a passage reflecting a trait his TV audiences may not be aware of, his streak of courtesy. George Bush "served bravely in America's great war," and is a man of "graciousness, honor, and integrity." He simply happens to be wrong. "He is yesterday and we are tomorrow." Long applause.

Leaving the building, Buchanan passed some friendly demonstrators, holding signs that declared FREE CROATIA NOW, and worked bright, barren Main Street. The press outnumbered the passersby by 10 to 1, but those Buchanan found he greeted with quiet charm. Cameramen scrambled before and behind him, stood on mailboxes, sprawled over the hoods of parked cars, to get their shots of him, of each other, of an infant accompanied by a sign, BABIES FOR BUCHANAN. The candidate bought a shirt for $32 ($4 more than Bush's socks), and went into a Radio Shack, where the salesman declared the PCs were made in America. Were the chips made in America too? Buchanan asked. The salesman shrugged in embarrassment.

Conservative Kamikaze

PATRICK James Buchanan was born in 1938 in Washington, D.C. "This is the camp to which I belong," he wrote in his memoirs: "middled-aged men with middle-class values, who entered the 1950s from their parochial schools." The household gods when he was growing up were Francisco Franco, Douglas MacArthur, and Joe McCarthy. Even more pertinent to him was a fourth god, cited a few pages later: the take-no-prisoners columnist Westbrook Pegler.

Given Buchanan's roots, it's no surprise he likes to scrap. Four of his uncles on his mother's side fought in World War II, and they were the pacific side of the family. His paternal grandfather stabbed a man in a bar. His father made his sons punch a bag daily, and on at least one occasion strapped them when they didn't. Pat's string of youthful brawls climaxed in college, when he assaulted two cops (the formal charge was simple assault, a misdemeanor).

Pat also learned that whenever he was in trouble with his father, "the way to plea bargain . . . was to exhibit some wit." His wits were trained at Gonzaga High School and Georgetown, Jesuit institutions when a Jesuit education meant something, and at the Columbia Journalism School, where he was a lone Goldwaterite. Years later, in response to a questionnaire from William Rusher, he gave a summary of the debating style he had developed, quoted in *How to Win Arguments*. "The worst mistake an arguer can commit is to bore the assemblage to distraction. . . . The most common error of the amateur is to reveal, by expression, that an antagonist's shaft has struck home. . . . The most formidable—and frustrating—opponent to confront is the man . . . who will defend no ideological terrain. Lastly, when caught *in flagrante* by an opponent, one should concede nothing. . . . Look directly ahead and stand up on the accelerator. There is at least the chance you will not have to pay the fine."

After three years writing editorials for the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Buchanan landed his first political job: conservative point man for Richard Nixon. He stuck with Nixon through wage and price controls, the China trip, and affirmative action, which shows that he too has tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Pragmatism, and he stuck with Nixon until the bitter end of Watergate, which shows his loyalty. After the fall, Buchanan went back to journalism as a pundit, taking two years off to serve as Ronald Reagan's communications director during the stormy second term.

Now the White House office he seeks is the oval one. The main reason for him to be seeking it is the stupidity of George Bush, which is practically a force of nature, like the tides in the Bay of Fundy. Bush's stupidity distresses conservatives no less—in some respects, it distresses them more—because it is inconsistent. One day we get Clarence Thomas, the next day we get the Civil Rights Act. That's how scientists drive rats crazy. If conservatives cannot send a kamikaze across Bush's bow, we might as well go home.

Is Buchanan the right man for the

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job? It may seem priggish to begin with his résumé, but that is the most obvious objection to me. I tremble for my country, and my movement, when I reflect that the only President-in-waiting we can come up with is someone in my line of work. Buchanan's candidacy also reflects the Praetorianization of the Presidency—the multiplication of its functions, and the swollen importance of those to whom they are farmed out. Once Presidents wrote their own speeches. Now a speechwriter wants to be President.

Then there is the Jewish Question. All the times Buchanan has been right (as in his defense of John Demjanjuk) and all the times he has been wronged (as when A. M. Rosenthal equated him with David Duke) do not drain away the residue of animus. Buchanan's columns have picked at Jews the way a kid picks at a scab. Buchanan's speeches will have to find some way to make amends.

The nativist label is a closer call. Buchanan was careful, in New Hampshire, to explain that a reference to the "landfill called multiculturalism" was aimed at educators, not immigrants. But he has also said that, given a choice between a million Englishmen and a million Zulus, we should take the English. He should stick to the first position. The second is exactly what the Know-Nothings used to say about Roman Catholics. Indeed, the Know-Nothings were half right. Catholic immigrants, arriving in an overwhelmingly Protestant country a century ago, were odd. They lost their oddity through assimilation—which is what multiculturalism is designed to prevent.

Last is protectionism. It isn't just the Japanese that Buchanan fears. In Manchester, he told reporters that, while he supports free trade with Canada, Mexico is a problem because wages there are so much lower than here. Buchanan thus would deprive America of its natural cheap manufacturing hinterland—what Thailand has been to the Japanese. In Buchanan's hands, protectionism would become what it would become in Richard Gephardt's or Jesse Jackson's—a political bidding war among mobilized interest groups, with consumers and unmobilized workers and employers picking up the tab. In his memoirs, Buchanan notes that he agreed with Richard Nixon that "the action and passion of our time" are engaged, not in domestic issues, but in "the world arena." For 45 years, the main bout in that arena was the fight against Communism. Now that the Soviet Union is no more, it almost seems as if Buchanan the protectionist is casting about for new sparring partners.

In addition to George Bush, the biggest sparring partner of them all.

Warm-Up Bout

MOST OF Buchanan's criticisms of the man who will defend so little ideological terrain are ones that all conservatives share: that Bush wobbled fatally on taxes and quotas, that his rhetoric about the New World Order is gaseous. But even as Buchanan has chosen to emphasize his more particular disagreements with the Bush Administration, so conservatives, Indians and chiefs, ought to ponder whether these disagreements also separate him from them.

Former New Hampshire Senator Gordon Humphrey said Buchanan (whom he does not support) could win 40 per cent of the vote there. After New Hampshire, on February 18, comes a cluster of contests which during the last cycle were called "the lesser Antilles." South Carolina on March 7 is the prelude to Super Tuesday, March 10. It is hard to see Buchanan lasting beyond that. Organization is not his strong point, and his Beltway supporters are a mixed bag—a few heavyweights, like Reed Larson, plus a lot of people who represent nothing but their letterheads.

The gateway to the future is New Hampshire. Arguing against Senator Humphrey's prediction is New Hampshire's suspicion of perceived eccentricity (it rejected Goldwater in 1964, and Reagan in 1976). Arguing for it is the economic state of the state (grim), and Bush's betrayal of the very tax pledge which won him the primary and the nomination last time around.

Whether he loses early or late, Buchanan will emerge with a mailing list and three more years of paid opinionating before the next go-round. Forget Estes Kefauver. The man who took on George Bush because he sniffed the Oval Office under Ronald Reagan is not going to quit after one warm-up bout. □

Dancing on Communism's Grave

DEATH OF A HERESY

Bread lines may have accelerated the demise of Communism, but revolutions do not live by bread alone.

GEORGE WEIGEL

WHAT DIED in the Soviet Union on August 21, 1991, was, in the strict sense of the term, a heresy. For Communism was never just economic foolishness married (in its Leninist form) to draconian methods of social control: Communism was a false doctrine, a congeries of false teachings about human nature, human community, human history, and human destiny. Therein lay its power: its power to attract, and its power to coerce.

Heresy often consists in the exaggeration of one part of a complex truth, and Communism was no exception to that rule. Indeed, Communism was particularly seductive in the West precisely because the taproots of Western civilization reach back into the stories and images of Jewish and Christian eschatology and apocalyptic. But Communism was evil not just because of its view of history, but because it taught falsely about man. And

Mr. Weigel is the President of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington. His most recent book, Freedom and Its Discontents, *has just been published.*

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from that falsehood came both the idiocies of a command economy and, far worse, the Gulag.

What was the Communist heresy? Simply put, it was the cruelest form of a more widespread evil that has beset the West since the prologue to the French Revolution: the tyranny of the political, which began with Rousseau and was itself a radically secularized version of the Jewish and Christian hope for a messianic age. In the case of Rousseau and his epigones, though, the messiah was "ultramundane": it was $99^{44}/_{100}\%$ transcendence-free. And the project was to remake flawed humanity—to usher in the messianic age of justice and righteousness—through the medium of politics. Communism, the ultimate expression of this heretical project, was Jewish and Christian eschatology forced into history, without God or God's messiah. Little wonder that those who got in the way were ruthlessly eliminated or, in one of Lenin's favorite verbs, "exterminated."

Focusing on Communism as a heresy also helps us grasp the central truth of the Revolution of 1989 and the New Russian Revolution of 1991: that these were first and foremost revolutions of the spirit, in which people said "No" on the basis of a higher and more compelling "Yes."

Throughout the Western world, pundits, academics, and reporters have been scrambling for over two years now to fix an explanatory label on these stunning events. "Delayed modernization" seems to be the bromide of choice at the moment: the Communist countries just couldn't compete economically and technologically, don't you know? But this soft economism is simply a less odious version of the ultramundane heresy. To accept it is to buy into one of the corollaries of Rousseau's false doctrine of the human, *viz.*, that the only real world is the world of the political. This is, of course, a most satisfying fantasy to indulge if you happen to be a member of the political class. And one

Mikhail Gorbachev's Unintended Consequences

MOSCOW

AS MIKHAIL Gorbachev adjusts to life as a pensioner, with all its free time for reflection and fond remembrances, he will undoubtedly be haunted by his mishandling of the post-coup political environment in the USSR.

From the moment he was liberated after the August coup, his every political statement, his every initiative, seemed to have as its aim the preservation of the central structure. That freedom from the central bureaucracy was what the republics meant by the independence they were demanding seemed to elude him.

Returning to Moscow from his three days' captivity in the Crimea, Gorbachev shunned the crowds and Russian deputies who had saved him, instead driving straight to embrace his Kremlin advisors. Then, in his first public appearance he indicated that the Communist Party would remain as the leading political power in the country. Although he was forced to abandon this position, he remained stubbornly dedicated to the central bureaucracy. He responded to the republics' calls for independence by attempting to co-opt their leaders with a share of executive power: each republic was offered a seat on the 12-member State Council, of which Gorbachev was to be the chairman. Beneath the Council, however, the monolithic centralized state was to remain virtually untouched. This became undisputable when he authorized, without State Council approval, virtually round-the-clock printing runs of the ruble to finance the failing bureaucracy. Similarly, the State Council's economic commission, headed by Ivan Silayev, was given the contradictory task of initiating reforms from within the existing economic structure in a way that would be acceptable both to the republics and to the center.

By November, Gorbachev's priorities had become quite clear to the republics, and when he proposed an incomprehensible Union treaty that spoke of 12 sovereign states, individually subjects of international law, forming a Union that would itself be the subject of international law, the republic leaders were so exasperated they simply left the room.

Yet it was not solely the republics' exasperation with an intransigent Mikhail Gorbachev that led them to overthrow him first economically and then politically. Tension was high in Moscow in the week following Ukraine's December 1 referendum on independence. The idea of Ukrainian independence unsettled many Muscovites; it disoriented their culturally sensitive common character to think of their southwestern neighbor as closer to Europe than to Moscow. Taxi drivers spoke with increasing agitation on the subject, their already lunatic driving causing new heights of passenger terror.

And indeed, full Ukrainian independence—a separate economy, army, and foreign and defense policies—would have undermined all the links between the existing republics at a time of maximum uncertainty. Ukrainians, however, had a lesser goal in mind: to rid themselves, and if possible everyone else, of the detested central government that continued to claim authority over its old empire.

Everyone realized in the first week of December that it was only a matter of when power would shift, and to whom. Thus the December 9 declaration of the Commonwealth by the three Slavic republics was a stabilizing move. Power was reconsolidated under a responsible, valid authority. Yet it was not cultural affinity, economic co-dependence, or international pressure that brought this stability about, but shrewd, aggressive management by Boris Yeltsin and his cabinet.

The referendum had not caught Yeltsin off guard, as it did President Bush, whose blurt-and-backpedal antics did little to give the impression of informed policy-making. Yeltsin realized early on the implications of the Ukrainian referendum: even if Ukraine could be convinced to cooperate militarily with the other republics, economic independence could cause great problems. For example, Leonid Kravchuk announced less

Mr. Calabresi is a writer based in Moscow.

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shouldn't underestimate the degree to which vanity has played a role in the Western elite's grasping at this explanatory straw. But "politics" (as the term is usually understood today) just doesn't explain the revolutions of 1989 and 1991.

For the great truth about these upheavals—the explanation that is commensurate with the nature of the evil that they overthrew—is that they were essentially *pre-political* revolutions. They were revolutions that began "before" politics, with the reconstruction of civil society. As the Polish authorities put it with unintentional accuracy during the martial-law period of 1981–83, Communism was in a "state of war" against society: politics was demanding to fill the space previously occupied by society and culture. The antidote to that tyranny of the political could not be more politics. It had to come from a revolution of the spirit, from a recovery of independent culture and a reconstruction of civil society. Not for nothing did one of the most powerful resistance groups in Poland style itself the "Committee for Social Self-Defense."

Put another way, Communism's tyranny of the political inevitably resulted in the atomization of society. Resistance required that the tissues of society be rebuilt. That meant rediscovering the virtue of social solidarity, of human fellow-feeling and a sense of mutual moral obligation. Solidarity, the virtue, preceded Solidarity, the trade union/political opposition.

A similar process has been under way in the late Soviet Union, noticed by a few Western analysts. While the media and some Western academics indulged in Gorbophilia, others looked at the rising democratic opposition *to Gorbachev* and at the reconstituted elements of civil society from which that opposition grew.

For several years now, S. Frederick Starr of Oberlin College has urged Western analysts to take more seriously the rapid growth of independent

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than a week after the coup that Ukraine would soon introduce its own currency. If it did so, it would amass an enormous number of rubles in return. What would prevent Kravchuk's government from dumping those rubles in Russia, buying up whatever it could? As one foreign businessman put it, gesturing with a hundred-ruble note, if the rest of the USSR were flooded with the rubles of 52 million Ukrainians, the people would soon be using the currency as toilet paper.

Realizing this, yet nonetheless faced with the Ukrainian people's determination to lay the central government to rest regardless of the consequences, Yeltsin moved to beat them to the punch by adopting a strategy advocated for some time by his advisor Gennadi Burbulis: declaring *Russia*'s independence.

On November 15, Yeltsin appointed a radical new government with himself as Prime Minister and Burbulis as First Deputy, and with the rest of the cabinet drawn principally from a group of young scholars and academics close to Burbulis. Chief among these is Yegor Gaidar, 35, the Minister for Economics and Finance. Known in Russia as a Reaganite conservative, Gaidar had spent the last decade as an underground free-marketeer. Although he had, during that time, worked with Grigory Yavlinsky and Stanislav Shatalin, both of whom had gone on to become principal economic reformers for Gorbachev, Gaidar had until November carefully avoided the political spotlight.

Once at the economic helm, however, he let loose with a program so radical that he and his aides were labeled kamikazes. Their reforms, legislators said, would prove so painful and unpopular that Yeltsin's resolve would crumble and he would fire them all—and indeed, he may yet.

In November, however, needing Gaidar's free-market know-how, Yeltsin began issuing the economist's decrees as fast as he and his cohorts could write them. Many of these have yet to be ratified by the occasionally intransigent Russian Supreme Soviet. But when Gaidar's plans, signed by Yeltsin, started streaming out of the Russian White House, most of the key Soviet ministries, already teetering on the brink of bankruptcy, simply collapsed. Ministers resigned left and right, only to be hired immediately by Yeltsin to run the Russian shadow ministries.

With the key ministries and their assets under the control of Yeltsin and Gaidar, the squeeze was on. Gosbank, the central Soviet bank, was running out of money, and Vneshekonombank, the bank of foreign trade, could no longer service its debts. Forty-eight hours before the referendum in Ukraine, Gorbachev meekly signed over to Yeltsin and Russia complete control of the finances of the USSR. In less than two weeks, Burbulis and Gaidar had taken Russia from waiting on Gorbachev to paying his salary.

AND IN so doing, they defused the immediate danger posed by Ukrainian independence. Now, if Ukraine issued its own currency, so would Russia. Indeed, in all aspects of economic reform Yeltsin could match or better his southwestern neighbor, thereby insuring that Russia's much larger economy would set the tone, if not the pace, of reform.

Ironically, those who had sought to shore up Gorbachev for the sake of stability had in fact been hastening disintegration. Ukraine was ready to go it alone when Union meant a continuation of the statist old regime, but readily joined Yeltsin's aptly named Commonwealth.

Indeed, this dynamic—Ukraine forcing change, Russia providing a stable medium for it—continues to create opportunities for rapid transition and modernization. It is self-evident that success relies on Ukraine's maintaining honorable goals and Russia's retaining competent policymakers. The West, however, should not misconstrue the republics' newfound vitality as destabilizing, and should recognize the noise of ongoing negotiations as a necessary part of the Commonwealth's shakedown cruise. The situation is far more promising than it was in October.

—MASSIMO CALABRESI

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social and cultural organizations across the former USSR. Here, Starr argued, was the existential rejection of the tyranny of the political; here was the civic and civil opposition on whose foundations a political opposition with greater tensile strength might be built. Similarly, James H. Billington, the distinguished historian of Russian culture now serving as Librarian of Congress (and the man who certainly should be the U.S. ambassador in Moscow right now), has been writing and speaking for years about the religious renaissance under way in Great Russia and throughout the former Soviet empire.

No, and Yes

HAD Billington, Starr, and others like them been taken as seriously as they deserved, and had the lessons of that prior revolution of the spirit been absorbed, the West might not have been quite so surprised by the non-violent resistance that checked the Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight in Moscow last August and, in so doing, put the final nail in the coffin of Communism.

In the collapse of the Yalta imperial system and the ultramundane eschatological fantasy it embodied, the persistence, even the resurgence, of moral conscience has been crucial. Vaclav Havel, in his brilliant 1978 essay "The Power of the Powerless," put his finger on both the core, and the point of maximum vulnerability, of the Communist enterprise. It was acquiescence: not enough people were willing to say "No"; too many people were willing to make those small, ritual gestures of consent by which the system reinforced its image as an unchangeable monolith. (Remember Havel's image of the greengrocer who, despite misgivings, nevertheless displays a sign reading "Workers of the World, Unite!" amidst the carrots and onions in his shop window.) That is what changed, over the past decade or so. And that change was the basis of the Revolution of 1989 and the New Russian Revolution.

But whence that new courage? Here, too, there were ironies in the fire. For, in yet another existential refutation of both Marxist theory and Western secularism, the courage to resist was largely religious in origin. Even in its more secular forms (as among several key Solidarity intellectuals), the courage to say "No" came from a "Yes" that transcended and relativized the tyranny of the political.

The first, great symbolic reference point for the revolution of the spirit that made possible the political revolution against Communism was the pilgrimage of John Paul II to his native Poland in June 1979: the moment when millions of Poles, looking at each other at those historic outdoor Masses, came to understand that "we" were a lot more powerful than "they." The end of the line may have come last August when, as James Billington noted, Father Aleksandr Borisov, an Orthodox priest and member of the Moscow City Council, distributed some two thousand Bibles to the soldiers in the tanks outside Boris Yeltsin's Russian parliament (only one soldier refused) and another two thousand to those on the barricades protecting Yeltsin's White House. Borisov then helped convince Patriarch Aleksei to intervene, and the patriarch issued a prayer that, as Billington put it, "anathematized fratricide."

And that, as we might say in another context, was the ballgame.

Putting Politics in Its Place

THAT MOST of the policy apparatus of Western governments, and much of the fraternity of Western pundits, has simply missed this revolution of the spirit is an indication of just how deeply what Jacques Ellul called "the illusion of politics" has infected the West. To decry the tyranny of the political is not, of course, to say that politics is unimportant: but it is to put politics in its place. Which means to remember that politics, in the great tradition of the West (the tradition deliberately rejected by Rousseau, Marx, and Lenin) is not in the first instance about the getting and keeping of power. Rather, "politics" is the ongoing and public deliberation about the good man and the good society. Politics is, ineluctably, normative. Politics is, inescapably, a function of culture. And the heart of culture is cult, religion.

The pre-political revolutions of 1989 and 1991 may give birth to the era of the post-political, and sooner rather than later. Rousseau's delusion of the politically driven eschaton will survive, but its devotees will be increasingly marginal. New heresies, similarly eschatological in orientation, will emerge (some already have: look at the New Age section in your local bookstore). But their passion will not be for politics-the-contest-for-power.

The remarkable events of the past biennium have revealed that the ultramundane heresy of Marxism–Leninism is finished as a world-historical force, and that the primary struggle in the West will be at the level of culture. The new *Kulturkampf* in the developed democracies will touch, at points, on the world of politics; like the poor, the John Frohnmayers of this world will, alas, always be with us. But it is altogether possible, and perhaps even likely, that the men and women of the

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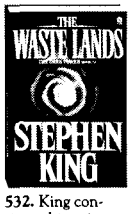

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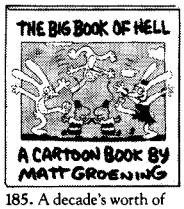

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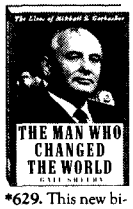

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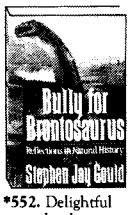

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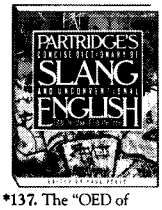

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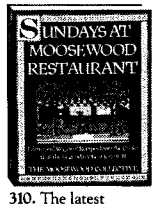

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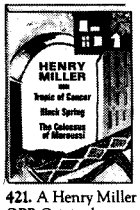

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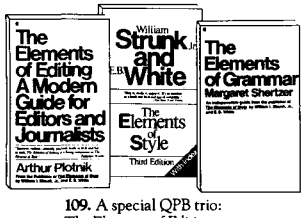
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twenty-first century will look far less to the order of politics as the focus of their energies, and far more to the order of culture. We may even see the revival of a true Judaeo-Christian humanism, in place of the sundry false humanisms that have beset us these past two centuries.

That would, in fact, be a wholly fitting wrap-up to the Revolution of 1989 and the New Russian Revolution. For it was the humanism whose true roots lie in Jewish and Christian concepts of the human person, human society, human history, and human destiny that finally toppled the modern Moloch, the false and anti-human "humanism" of Marxism–Leninism. Today's springtime of nations was born from a springtime of the human spirit. We would do well to think about that, and remember it. □

When Felons Go Free

WORSE THAN A CRIME

The blunders of our political system have made crime a virtually risk-free enterprise.

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG

CONGRESS has debated a comprehensive crime bill for several years, but failed, once more, to pass it this year. The crime rate is horrendous and the criminal-justice system is becoming less effective every day. Yet, had it become law, the bill wouldn't have helped much. Consider some of its provisions.

A five-year waiting period for the purchase of guns would have inconvenienced law-abiding purchasers who buy from licensed dealers. But currently there is no serious way to make background checks (the bill provided none). Hence, released convicts, or insane persons, could have got their guns. Actually, even prohibiting the sale of guns altogether would be of little use. Drugs remain readily available despite prohibition. In New York guns are prohibited, yet criminals, even schoolboys, get them easily. Only the law-abiding are disarmed. Why should we legislate unilateral disarmament throughout the nation?

The bill would have authorized the death penalty for about fifty federal crimes. This would have made little difference, since nothing was done to facilitate actual execution. There are about 2,500 convicts on death row now. After a waiting period of, on the average, eight years, we execute fewer than 25 a year. It follows that most will die of old age. Currently, the federal judiciary bounces death sentences around endlessly, in response to unlimited *habeas corpus* petitions. The bill would have done nothing to limit them.

Congress also refused to do anything about the exclusionary rules invented by the federal judiciary. They bar the admission of evidence improperly obtained. Now, police who act unlawfully should be punished. But it is bizarre to exclude relevant evidence. Trials should be about the guilt or innocence of defendants, not about the admissibility of the available evidence. The Constitution does not require letting the criminal go because the constable made a mistake.

The bill would have made some new money available for criminal justice—not, however, where it is needed. Understandably scared by the high crime rate, people incessantly call for more police to protect them, although police usually appear only after one has been mugged, burglarized, or murdered. Would more police lead to less crime? Never fear, I shan't trot out the "social causes" of crime popular with liberals. Some are plausible but none suggest any practical remedy. Poverty? Well, yes, not many rich people engage in burglaries—but the crime rate has a nasty habit of rising with prosperity. Slums? Drugs? Alcohol? Family disintegration? Sure; but how does one stop drunkenness, or family disintegration? Let's leave aside "social causes." Wouldn't more police help, at least temporarily? I don't think so.

Criminal Injustice

RECENTLY I spent some time with the D.A. of a medium-sized city. He told me that, in an average year, his office files about 5,000 felony charges. Since there may be several charges against the same offender, let us assume that 2,500 persons annually are charged with felonies in his city. The local courts cannot handle more than 150 to 200 trials a year. This situation is typical.

What happens to the offenders charged with burglary, armed robbery, or mugging, with aggravated assault, murder, theft, or attempted offenses of all kinds? Their attorneys, almost all public defenders, are as aware of the limited capacity of the courts as the D.A. is. There is no way of trying more than 5 per cent of those charged with felonies. Offenders must be induced to plead guilty by reducing the charges against them so that trials can be avoided. Hence felony charges against nearly all defendants are reduced, often to misdemeanors. The 150 to 200 trials that can be held deal with major felonies, such as murders, or with the exceptional offenders who refuse to plead guilty, thinking they can do better through a trial. Mostly they are wrong.

There is also a strategy, tacitly accepted by the courts, for crimes regarded as minor (vandalism, shoplifting, minor assaults). These cases are adjourned until the complaining witnesses, the victims, get tired of wasting their time. Once they fail to show, the case is dismissed. Sometimes, if the defendant does not show up, a bench warrant may be issued. It is meaningless since it is not enforced. In short, "minor crimes" have been effectively decriminalized. The system is too busy with major ones.

Once a defendant has pleaded guilty to a reduced charge he will often get a suspended sentence or probation instead of the years in prison his felony

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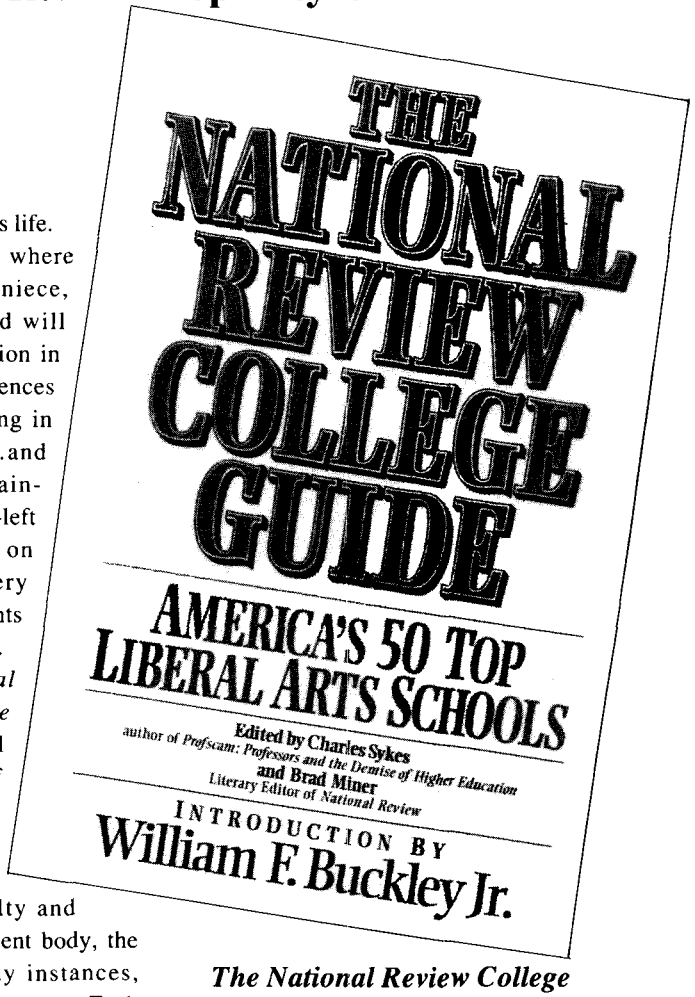
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Literary Editor of National Review
INTRODUCTION BY
William F. Buckley Jr.

We'll get the bad part over with fast. Things are pretty bad on some campuses. There are no more course-distribution requirements — anything goes.

There is no core curriculum — because there is no core of common values on which to base one. There is cynicism in the classroom about the Western tradition and American values. And if all this isn't bad enough, there are curbs on free expression — it's better not to voice your views on certain subjects unless your opinions are "politically correct." You might flunk. You could become an outcast...or even be expelled.

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legally deserved. Most defendants don't have prior felony convictions (which would make for a harsher sentence) even if they have committed felonies before. Their prior felony charges also were reduced to misdemeanors. If there is a juvenile record it is sealed. Thus, defendants may be found to have no serious prior convictions, even if they committed major offenses. And, though we live in the age of computers, courts often are unaware of convictions elsewhere.

Prosecutors are compelled to reduce charges if the system is to function at all. We may have too few police; yet we have far more arrests than the courts can handle. Most offenders avoid imprisonment; which is why they find their criminal careers so rewarding. Before we hire more police to catch additional offenders, we need more prosecutors and courts to deal with the offenders police already are catching.

If more offenders were sentenced to prison, where would we put them? Aren't prisons overcrowded already? They are. But judges were never meant to serve as real-estate agents, sending convicts to prison when there are vacancies and keeping them out when there are none. It is for legislators to find or produce prison space.

Charge reduction via plea bargaining has become an underhanded way of keeping criminals out of prison while pretending to punish them. It keeps the problem off the politicians' back. Yet non-punishment is the major "social cause" of crime. And non-punishment will remain our practice, until we have courts that are not too busy to punish criminals and prisons in which they can serve their time.

Is there really no room in prison now? If we count the currently available cells, there isn't. But if we use common sense, room can be created, and at low cost. There are many abandoned military bases which could become low- and minimum-security prisons. Convicts serving less than one year are unlikely to escape. They can be held in very low-security prisons, even work camps in isolated areas. Sentences of less than six months should be served in such camps exclusively. With work incentives the camps could pay for themselves.

In most states the cost of building prisons is inflated—$225,000 or more per cell in New York. The costs are so high because of legislation passed to benefit construction unions. Thus in New York the Wicks law mandates different contractors for plumbing, electricity, etc. instead of a general contractor. This about double costs. The state also pays the highest wages locally payable according to union schedules. Need we go on? On the other hand prisoners are given no serious work incentives and often no work. Unions have succeeded in keeping most prisoners idle, except for some housekeeping chores. Keeping a prisoner in New York costs $58,000 per year. Prisoners are not coddled. But there is a top-heavy bureaucracy; and there are incredibly inefficient practices.

Can we afford more prisoners? The proportion of the population in prison is quite high in the U.S.; but so is the crime rate. We cannot afford fewer prisoners: crime costs far more than imprisonment, although the cost is born by the victims and not the government. Perhaps there are better ways than prison to control crime. But none of those proposed so far really promises to dispense with imprisonment. Consider some proposals.

1. *Income-day fines*. A fine of, say, seven days' income might mean $500 for one offender and $5,000 for another who has a much higher income. This seems fair and expedient; but most offenders do not earn a regular income. They would have the choice of earning money and paying the fine within a period specified by the court (which would have to estimate their earning capacity), or going to jail. Most would still go to jail.

2. *Community work* avoids all or part of imprisonment, by avoiding punishment. It amounts to a farce. What virtue there is in it could be captured by a fine great enough so that offenders would have to work to avoid prison.

3. *Restitution*. The effects do not differ from those of fines already discussed. Restitution is not a punishment but a civil obligation the offender owes to his victim. To be sure, victims find it costly and unproductive to sue offenders for the restitution owed them. Perhaps restitution should be imposed, but it should not take the place of punishment, which must be imposed independently for disturbing the security of the community.

4. *House arrest* controlled by electronic devices is useful in some cases but does not prevent criminal activity at home and is hardly punitive enough for a burglar or robber. Still, it may reduce imprisonment somewhat.

5. *Banishment*. As a condition of probation the offender would not be allowed to live in certain areas (e.g., the New York metropolitan area) for several years. Banishment may interrupt a criminal career as effectively as imprisonment.

6. *Exile*. The offender would be ordered to live in a certain place in which there are few criminal opportunities. Since there may be few economic opportunities as well, he might

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have to live on welfare. This still would be far cheaper than imprisonment—even if the community to which the offender was exiled were fully reimbursed. Communities probably would accept exiled offenders only if they were allowed a profit. Still, exile would be cheaper than imprisonment and no less effective, for non-violent offenders.

What happens if offenders violate court orders and return home, or fail to pay their fine or to do their "community work"? They will have to be imprisoned. We are stuck with imprisonment, and, contrary to what reformers preach, even very high rates of imprisonment may be better than non-punishment, the current alternative. Non-punishment, the all too good chance criminals have of getting away with impunity, is the major cause of high crime rates. Unless those tempted to commit crimes have a realistic expectation of being punished, unless they run a high risk, we cannot expect them to be deterred. Crime must not pay. It does now, all too often.

Most career criminals—a small group responsible for a disproportionate number of crimes—change careers after they reach the age of forty, more or less. But suppose, *arguendo*, that 50 per cent of the adult population consisted of criminals who could not be persuaded to change their ways. If they were imprisoned, the law-abiding citizens would be better off despite the cost. Crime costs more. Fortunately, far less than half of the population need be imprisoned. At present fewer than 700,000 are. But if crime led to prison more readily—if the risk of punishment were more serious than it is now—the crime rate, and ultimately the prison population, would fall. It is high because present policies invite rather than deter crime. If we want to deter crime we need more judges, prosecutors, and prisons. □

The Open Question

BUSH'S STRENGTH

Some see George Bush as the not very good that is the enemy of the best. Have they considered the alternatives?

PETER W. RODMAN

I CAN TESTIFY from personal observation that NATIONAL REVIEW's editorial inviting a challenge to President Bush ("Fortune Favors the Brave," December 16) was the product of much soul-searching and honorable conviction. As a Senior Editor with a special interest in foreign policy, however, I ask my colleagues' indulgence to let me record my disagreement.

Because of his recognized mastery in national security and foreign affairs, President Bush deserves re-election. Indeed his re-election is essential. *NR* and I are at one in the belief that in this area at the very least, Pat Buchanan offers no acceptable alternative; nor do I see any other likely conservative candidate who can match the President.

This is not a moment to dismiss foreign policy and national security as passé. There is turbulence enough in the world. Whatever reality ultimately takes the place of the former Soviet Union will be a disproportionate factor of power, needing an American counterweight on the European Continent. As Germany and Japan grow stronger, America's role in anchoring them to the international structure, especially in the military field, takes on even greater importance as a factor of global stability and reassurance. The Third World, while the scene of hopeful political and economic trends, is simultaneously the breeding ground of thugs, some of whom may get hold of weapons of mass destruction. There is no assurance of security or freedom without American engagement.

The President's performance in the Gulf, moreover, was an extraordinary feat of leadership. In August 1990, who imagined that the world would be willing to stand up to Saddam in such fashion? That it did so was the result of the President's personal commitment, skill, and guts. He also deserves credit, inter alia, for stage-managing German unification within NATO, for pursuing the North American Free Trade Area, and for bringing Arab–Israeli diplomacy to a moment of opportunity. I have my disagreements—including the Gulf War endgame, the treatment of Boris Yeltsin, some of the tactics in Mideast diplomacy—but they are far outweighed by the achievements. Building on the Reagan legacy, Bush has done much to consolidate and strengthen our world position. The main threat to it, in fact, is the isolationist trend at home.

From this perspective, undermining the President seems a risky course. Weakening him in the spring risks contributing to his defeat in the fall. I know there are conservatives (not necessarily *NR*'s editorialist) who would relish Bush's defeat in the hope that, as happened between 1976 and 1980, a Democratic President will self-destruct so thoroughly that conservatives, having recaptured the GOP, will ride back triumphantly in 1996. It is absurd, in my view, to assume that the unique historical conditions of 1976–80 will automatically replicate themselves and that a Democratic President, once elected, will obligingly commit suicide. It is more likely that the Democrats, controlling both the executive and the legislative branches, will carry out all the policies at home and abroad that conservatives deplore, most of which Bush has succeeded in blocking.

Democrats tell me that there are those on the Left who see a crash coming and would actually prefer to see Bush re-elected so that it will happen on his watch; then *they* see a very liberal *Democrat* winning in 1996!

All this comports with the reputedly Leninist theory of "the worse, the better." Such a style of politics will ultimately make the country ungovernable and, not only incidentally, undermine our ability to lead internationally at a critical time. □

Mr. Rodman, now an NR *Senior Editor, was an official in the Reagan and Bush Administrations.*

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Mr. Walsh's North Star

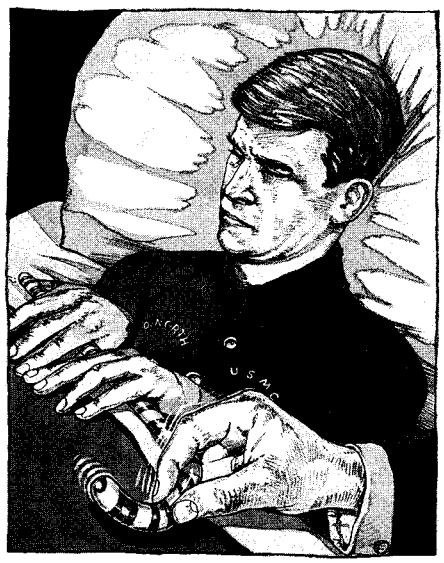
WILLIAM McGURN

AMONG THE many benefits of having a young niece around during the holidays is that it gives one an excuse to watch old favorites like *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. This is the fellow, you might recall, who tries to stop Christmas from coming by stealing all the presents from Whoville while Boris Karloff sings "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch" in an appropriately sinister tone. Being not quite four years old, Emily has a hard time imagining a character more villainous than the Grinch. And of course her child's sense of justice is assuaged by his lack of success and ultimate conversion to good.

Someday when Emily is old enough, her uncle will tell her the truth. Grinches we have in abundance, but the problem with a real Grinch is not so much a heart three times too small but a legal staff, prosecutorial scope, and claim on the public purse many times too large. Here, inside the Beltway, Grinches bear an uncanny resemblance to Special Prosecutor Lawrence Walsh. Over the past five years he has indicted and intimidated a score of former Reagan officials on the basis of "crimes" no other prosecutor would ever have recognized. In the end it was to little avail. Robert Gates was confirmed as Director of Central Intelligence. Elliott Abrams pleaded guilty to the equivalent of a speeding violation. Both Oliver North and John Poindexter had the charges against them dropped. And somehow Christmas came once again.

Under Fire: An American Story, by Oliver L. North, with William Novak (HarperCollins, 446 pp., $25)

The North and Poindexter dismissals were particularly tough on Grinch Walsh, leaving him with no stolen presents to show for his $50-million expense account. But it's also somewhat tough on Oliver North himself, at least in terms of his just-published *Under Fire*. Had there remained the air of impending doom around the former National Security Council staffer, his book might have focused the nation's attention on whether what Lawrence Walsh is doing bears any relation to justice. But with the threat of a stint in the pokey removed, the debate shifted from the constitutional to the confrontational: whether Ronald Reagan knew, really knew, what was going on.



Fred Carlson

Oliver North says he did. Ronald Reagan says he didn't. Others, including many of those who were intimately involved, said they don't know whether Reagan knew, didn't know, or knew but then convinced himself that he didn't know. Putting aside his own claim (for which he concedes he has no real evidence), North probably put it best when he says that "President Reagan didn't always know what he knew." That may sound harsh, and it is certainly far from gallant, but it is nothing more than other Reagan admirers have said about the man and—given the President's confused performance during his own filmed testimony about the affair—eminently plausible.

There remains, to be sure, the question of Oliver North's own relation to the truth. "When Ollie would say to you, 'The Contras are starving,' he didn't mean that the Contras were literally starving," says one former associate. "It was just his way of saying they were in bad shape, and we knew that." This gift for drama is far from making him a liar (no one who has ever written direct-mail pieces is in a position to cast stones here). But coupled with the admissions about being less than honest on a few occasions, it does bring to mind the elementary admonition to hear both sides of a tale before reaching a conclusion.

In the event, *Under Fire* is by no means a sustained grudge piece against Reagan; in fact, North makes it clear that whatever hard feelings he has against the Gipper are based almost entirely on Reagan's role in first agreeing to a special prosecutor and then failing to pardon the subjects of Walsh's investigations before leaving office. These are both perfectly valid reasons for a grudge. But the book's importance is larger than the questions of whether or not Reagan knew, whether North or McFarlane is telling the truth (though McFarlane surely deserves some credit for shooting down Walsh's case against North by admitting he had been influenced by North's testimony before Congress), or whether North was right or wrong. The most interesting question is whether North et al. ought to have been prosecuted in the first place, regardless of whether they were right or wrong. North gets right to the point in his first chapter:

> Despite everything that's been said or implied, the "diversion" was not illegal. You could argue that it was a bad idea—that much is certainly debatable—but despite all the allegations, the transfer of funds did not violate any laws. After five years and tens of millions of dollars spent on investigations, prosecutions, trials, and tribunals, no one involved in Iran–Contra was ever tried for "diverting" anything.

It is seldom noted even where Law-

Mr. McGurn is NR's Washington Bureau Chief.

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rence Walsh did come up with convictions, that they were by and large for actions relating to the Iran–Contra investigation and not Iran–Contra itself. Abrams, for example, was convicted for misleading Congress about solicitations made to the Sultan of Brunei for money for the Contras, not for the perfectly legal solicitations.

I am of the camp that thinks the arms-for-hostages swaps with Iran were a horrible idea. North admits this early on, but he implies it was worth the risk. Undoubtedly it's an arguable point, but I would base my case on North's own account of how he pestered Bud McFarlane not to call off talks that were going nowhere during their first visit to Teheran, how the photos and videotapes of the hostages had emotionally affected him, and how all of this had led him to the conclusion "that saving a life—or trying to—is even more important than preserving a policy." It's not that this is not an understandable reaction to the special pressures of the task. It's *because* it is understandable that you establish principles beforehand, to serve when temptation beckons.

That something is clearly wrongheaded, however, does not make it unconstitutional, and here I would call Mr. Walsh as my witness for the opposition. With all the resources at hand, with unprecedented prosecutorial discretion, he has yet to produce evidence of anything unconstitutional. If so determined a man, with all these resources at his command, could not come up with anything substantive, does that not effectively call into question the wisdom of his own employment? The Founding Fathers, after all, thought executive malfeasance would best be corrected either by the impeachment powers granted Congress or by the voters at the election booth. Like so much other political mischief, the extra-constitutional office of special prosecutor traces its lineage to Watergate, so that it has now become a weapon with which a Democratic-controlled Congress can embarrass Republican Administrations by criminalizing policy with which they disagree. In the wake of the Evil Empire's collapse, the war in the Gulf, and the Sandinista defeat at the polls, it might also be worth while to ask, as North does, "Why were those policy differences [between the two parties] so great to begin with?"

In the meantime, the special prosecutor continues his term, and North correctly points out that by not taking on Congress directly Reagan helped contribute to the weakening of the Presidency. The writers of the Federalist Papers could not have foreseen a Boland Amendment or War Powers Resolution Act, but they certainly would not have been surprised. They would have assumed, however, that the executive branch would fight back, as, for example, George Washington did when he refused to give in to a congressional demand for details of negotiations behind the Treaty of Paris. By allowing the special prosecutor to hound his former associates in the first place, and then by failing to pardon them before he left office, Reagan not only unleashed great personal anguish for the affected families, he also inflamed the appetites of a Congress hellbent on settling policy differences in the courthouse rather than at the ballot box.

Did I mention that *Under Fire* is also funny? To be sure, there is much more here about North's early marital problems than I think decent to print (another subject in which the public's right not to know ought to be invoked), as well as a number of references to his personal relationship with the Lord to remind you that he is a born-again Christian. With anyone else these might have been simply ponderous, but North's essential good grace and humor, reminiscent of Reagan, serve him well. These frequent allusions to Scripture did not go unnoticed by the press, and when teased about them he said that the Bible was one of two things he made sure to read every day, the other being the *Washington Post*. "That way I know what both sides are thinking."

The Grinch never had a chance. □

The Sick Mind

RICHARD RYAN

BARRING startling new evidence, the arrival of Gary Sick's much-heralded book would seem to mark the final flight of the "October Surprise" theory, the scandalous claim that in 1980 Ronald Reagan's campaign made a deal with the Iranian government to prevent the release of 52 American hostages until after the U.S. presidential election. Mr. Sick has become the most prominent advocate of the theory, and *October Surprise* is an intriguing but unconvincing summary of his personal inquiry into the allegations.

***October Surprise*, by Gary Sick (Times Books/Random House, 277 pp., $23)**

Thanks to his reputation as a Middle East scholar and public official (he served on the National Security Council under Presidents Ford and Reagan, as well as Carter), Sick has managed to make his defection to the camp of the conspiracy theorists a national event, beginning last April when the *New York Times* published his across-the-bow editorial calling for an investigation of the affair. To understand why congressional Democrats were ultimately unable to muster the votes necessary to hunt this particular butterfly, it is necessary to review fairly the charges and the evidence supporting them. Sick's book, after all, represents the best shot the theorists are likely to get.

In the spring of 1980, according to the scenario constructed by Sick, William Casey initiated contacts with a pair of Iranian brothers named Jamshid and Cyrus Hashemi (only one of the Hashemis, Jamshid, is still alive; he is a major source for this book). Because Casey and other high-level operatives were convinced that a release of the American hostages to President Carter would throw the election to the Democrats, the Republicans arranged, through the Hashemis, a series of European meetings with Iranian officials in which a deal was cut: delay any release of the hostages until after November 4 and do good business with the new Administration later.

In the last few years, many have stepped forward alleging first-hand knowledge of these supposed meetings and deals. Several of these "witnesses"

Mr. Ryan writes frequently about art and culture for NR *and other journals.*

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are convicted criminals and blatant fabricators, and Mr. Sick clearly labels them as such. Just how ridiculous some of these sources and their stories are bears emphasizing. For instance, Mr. Sick should have known (and, if he did know, should have reported) that his much-cited Ari Ben-Menashe told the leftist newspaper *In These Times* last spring that it was Carter's CIA director Stansfield Turner who asked the Israelis to cooperate with the Republican conspirators. Given that Admiral Turner has been a long-time proponent of the October Surprise theory, this preposterous assertion virtually buries Ben-Menashe's already strained credibility.

For the most part, however, Mr. Sick is commendably open about the dubious character and claims of his informants. Many of those who read the November 18 cover story in *The New Republic* thoroughly trashing his sources may be surprised to discover that Sick himself presents much of the same record, and notes many of the same arguments as his detractors. Why then has he pursued the allegations? Because in his mind the circumstantial evidence against the Reaganites is so strong.

Among that evidence, there is the suspicious release of the hostages the moment that Reagan was inaugurated. There is the well documented effort by the Reagan campaign to infiltrate the Carter White House and learn what it was doing about the hostage crisis. There is William Casey's curious trip to London in July of 1980, at a time when Jamshid Hashemi claims Casey also secretly met with Iranians in Madrid. There is a meeting at Washington's L'Enfant Plaza Hotel in the fall of 1980 between an unidentified Middle Eastern arms dealer, who claimed he could broker a hostage swap, and three senior Reagan staffers. There is an unexplained dinner meeting between Ed Meese and Cyrus Hashemi in December of 1980. Finally there is evidence—well documented by Mr. Sick—of massive transfers of U.S.-made arms to Iran through Israel, commencing as soon as the Reagan Administration took office.

Sick's exposition of these points gives one pause, but only a moment's worth. All of them are best explained, on reflection, by the weird dynamics of international politics in 1980. The fact that the hostage crisis was resolved on Inauguration Day, for instance, when considered carefully, points away from an October Surprise, and is easily understood (as Sick himself allows) as an Iranian gesture meant to humiliate President Carter. Why, after all, if the Republicans cut a deal, would they want hostages released on the day Reagan entered the White House, when any less conspicuous date following the November election would have been preferable? And why would Casey risk traveling to Madrid to meet with Iranians who could photograph and blackmail him, if he had been, as

Jennifer Lawson

Mr. Sick asserts, in constant contact with the "well-connected" (and U.S.-based) Hashemi brothers since the spring of 1980?

As for the Reagan infiltration of the Carter campaign, this is little more than high-level hardball politics of the sort that the losing campaign always denounces. The Carter Administration was well aware of the political value of a pre-election hostage release, and it's not shocking that the Reagan campaign would want to track the opposition's covert maneuvering, or take advantage of voluntary leaks by Carter staffers. As Carter press secretary Jody Powell is quoted as saying of Republican efforts to forestall a Democratic hostage deal: "It was supposed to create problems for us, and to some extent it did. Fair enough. We were trying to create problems for them too."

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of all this, however, is why the Reagan Administration would knowingly permit the Israelis to ship as much as $40 billion worth of arms to Iran in the early 1980s, at the same time that Washington was promoting "Operation Staunch," a worldwide embargo of the sale of U.S.-made arms to Iran.

The best answer is simply that from the beginning the Israeli government did a good job of co-opting Reagan foreign policy toward Iran. The Israelis can hardly be blamed for acting in their own interest, which, as Sick discusses, has always included a close, secret relationship with the Iranians. And it is certainly credible that Israel would play on U.S. fears of Soviet influence in Iraq in order to win Washington's cooperation in the re-arming of Teheran. One only regrets that the Reaganites never managed to untangle U.S. policy from Tel Aviv's own intricate dealings.

Reading *October Surprise*, one senses a slow drift from the forums of empiricism to miasmic regions of speculative metaphysics. It is easy to understand the theory's quasi-religious hold on the Left, which after all would like nothing better than to believe that Ronald Reagan somehow stole the election. The theory does nothing less, in the eyes of many of it proponents, than delegitimize the last decade of conservative successes, mystically erasing history and substituting self-righteous indignation.

Sick's motivations are more difficult to understand, since he does have a record of non-partisan public service, and since he was an opponent of the October Surprise thesis for years. I can personally testify to Sick's previous opposition to the theory. In the spring of 1987, I contacted him to discuss the October Surprise, which I was then researching. He was brusquely dismissive of the idea, and assured me that all the facts of the hostage crisis could be explained by the intricacies of revolutionary Iran.

So why the conversion? The answer is easily detectable in the pages of his book. Mr. Sick opens with quotes from *Hamlet* and Sherlock Holmes, and closes with a long personal note in which he describes traveling to Monte Carlo to meet with a cryptic Iranian businessman. He tells of meeting contacts in sleazy bars, of hearing tales of prison terms and gun smuggling, and of wandering through what he rightly calls "Eric Ambler land." After years as a bureaucrat and academic, Sick has apparently submitted too much to the romantic nightworld of arms dealers and covert ops. The same syn-

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drome can entrance experienced journalists, but one does wish Sick had gathered a little firmer evidence before implicating innocent people.

However gullible the conspiracy theorists might be, however, the Reagan Administration itself is in a sense responsible for the survival of the October Surprise fantasy. It was Mr. Reagan who, just one week into his Administration, warned terrorists that hostage takers would henceforth meet with "swift and severe retribution," and yet allowed his Middle East policy to dissolve into a series of arms deals and accommodations with the sponsors of terrorism and hostage taking. If the October Surprise is in the least credible, the Iran–Contra affair made it so. □

Shipping of Fools

DOUGLAS BANDOW

THE trade warriors are on the loose. House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt demands sanctions against the Japanese; the U.S. International Trade Commission imposes penalties on imported liquid-crystal computer screens; the Customs Service seizes Chinese-made clothing. These are but a few examples of a policy that is, in the words of James Bovard, a prolific antagonist of Washington's many loot-minded interest groups, sacrificing "Americans' freedom and prosperity . . . on an altar of fair trade."

The Fair Trade Fraud, by James Bovard (St. Martin's, 328 pp., $24.95)

So illogical is current law that few protectionists want to be known as protectionists. They have instead adopted the standard of "fair trade," but, argues Bovard, " 'fair trade' is one of the great intellectual frauds of the twentieth century. The louder politicians have demanded fair trade, the more U.S. trade policies have become a travesty of fairness."

Particularly obnoxious is the hypocrisy of American policy-makers. Notwithstanding their rhetoric about "fairness," most American politicians simply want to protect influential constituents. Consequently, Washington works far harder to close U.S. markets than to open those of other nations. Observes Bovard:

> Since 1980, the U.S. Government has negotiated over 170 bilateral trade agreements to restrict exports to the United States. If a Third World nation's exports of a clothing item equal 1 per cent or more of U.S. production, the U.S. Government almost automatically restricts that nation's exports. . . . Foreign nations are increasingly denounced as unfair unless they provide "affirmative action" programs to force foreign businesses to buy more American products.

Even if American trade law were not blatantly political, current policy would still not promote "fairness." For there is nothing fairer than freedom, allowing producers to compete on the basis of quality and price. Says Bovard, "The myth of fair trade is that politics and bureaucrats are fairer than markets—that government coercion and restriction can create a fairer result than voluntary agreement."

Tariffs may be the most straightforward form of import limitation. Alas, Bovard writes, we have "the best tariff code that American industry could buy," the "accumulated junk heap of over a hundred years of political payoffs and kickbacks." Foreign products are now subject to 8,753 different rates, ranging up to 458.3 per cent for tobacco stems.

Perversities naturally abound in a system that "looks like a variable value-added tax that was concocted in a lunatic asylum." For instance, cheaper products tend to be subject to higher duties, and heavy tariffs are imposed irrespective of the importance of the goods, including lithotripters to destroy kidney stones; fish, fruit, and vegetables; special wool-blend fabrics for firefighters' protective garments; and so on. And the arguments over product definitions—is a van a "truck" or a "car"?—would be funny if the effect of such seemingly minor distinctions were not so serious.

Throughout the 1980s non-tariff barriers, particularly quotas, became increasingly popular. Bovard devotes a chapter to one of the worst of these policies, the "Multifiber Arrangement," or MFA, designed to protect both actual and nonexistent domestic textile industries. As part of MFA the U.S. imposes more than three thousand individual quotas on products from forty different countries. The losers from such a policy are obvious: "the MFA has been a disaster for world commerce and a stab in the back to the poorest of the poor, both in America and in the Third World," writes Bovard. Quotas are also routinely applied to other products, such as autos, ice cream, steel, and sugar, with predictably harmful results.

Bovard is devastating in his scourging of protectionist measures allegedly used to combat "dumping," or below-cost sales. U.S. law presumes that foreign manufacturers regularly sell goods at a loss in order to supplant domestic producers. It is hard to construct even a theoretical case that would justify a firm's generating a tide of red ink in order to gain market share, since competitors would re-emerge if it hiked prices. In practice, real dumping rarely, if ever, occurs: the government simply convicts firms based on analyses that would receive an F in an introductory economics course. Yet Americans are paying more for everything from photo albums to roof shingles as a result.

Washington hypocritically criticizes foreign subsidies and retaliates with perverse and arbitrary countervailing duties. The International Trade Commission regularly rules, regardless of the evidence, against consumers and for businesses pleading for protection. Congress behaves like—well, Congress. In one of his more restrained moments, Bovard observes that "it is often difficult to discern whether they are as ill informed or ignorant as they sometimes sound."

The economic benefits of free trade are indisputable, but in Bovard's view the more important issue is "the future of liberty." Thus, he argues, we should ask "not whether foreign governments treat American companies fairly, but whether American citizens receive fair treatment from the U.S. Government." And he's right. James Bovard has written a book that defies refutation and demands action. □

Mr. Bandow is a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute and the author of The Politics of Plunder: Misgovernment in Washington.

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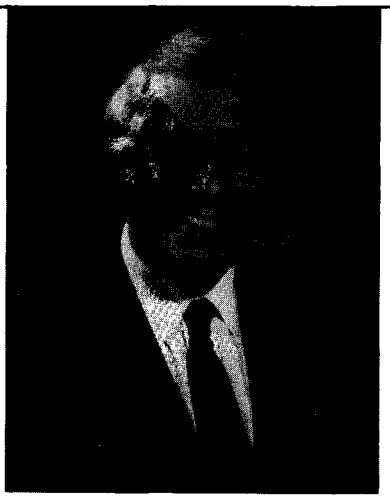

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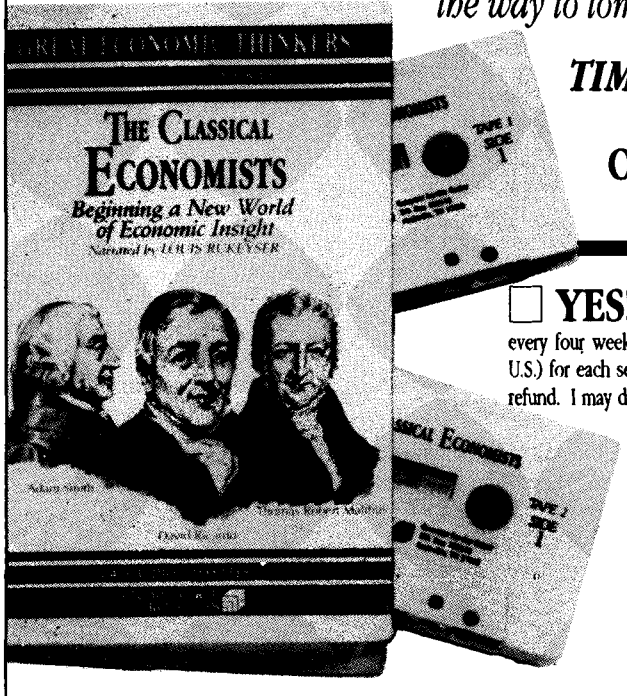

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The Still Rising Sun

ROBERT ELEGANT

STANLEY Weintraub does not brood, in this compelling account of December 7, 1941, about Japanese refusal to accept the guilt for the sins committed in the Second World War—or, for that matter, Japanese self-exculpation. And this is just as well: as it is, the book is a remarkable feat of detailed, minute-by-minute narrative. I suspect Mr. Weintraub agrees with the quote he cites from a high-school textbook: "War makes people cruel. So we cannot say that one nation is more cruel than another."

The "day of infamy," in this narrative, is preternaturally long: 47 hours, thanks to the International Date Line dividing the belligerents. But throughout, for seven hundred pages, one hears the hum of approaching planes, the shouts and screams, the rattle of small arms, the whine of falling shells, and the incessant explosions as the most extensive conflict in human history expands into its full destructiveness. To make and place the thousands of minute tiles that make up this great mosaic of war is a remarkable feat; to have done it so artfully is astounding.

Here for instance, in a chapter titled "Hour 30," is the attack as seen by Colonel William E. Farthing:

> [Farthing's] view from Hickam control tower included Pearl Harbor. Watching for incoming B-17s he first saw what he took to be Navy aircraft, coming around to the Navy base at the east of the island, and we heard a bunch of airplanes. . . . coming from about 10,000 feet. . . . They dived down on Pearl Harbor. I saw a black object leave the first and hit with an explosion. The first plane I saw turned its wings up and I could see the Rising Sun.

From other accounts, we watch the attack as seen by both a Japanese bomber pilot and his victims below:

> In a searing flash at 8:08, which [the pilot] saw from his plane, an armor-piercing bomb detonated in the forward magazine of the *Arizona*. The ship crumpled and sank with a thousand men trapped below, including Rear Admiral Isaac Campbell Kidd and the *Arizona* Captain Franklin Van Valkenbergh. Debris from the *Arizona* engulfed the *Vestal*—chunks from the ship and equipment, even, Ensign B. C. Besser remembered, "legs, arms, and heads of men—all sorts of bodies." . . . Flooded by torpedo hits, the listing *Nevada* tried to get up steam and move away from the burning oil. . . . Realizing it, the Japanese pilots saw a chance to block the channel with the bulk of the *Nevada*. They went after the crippled ship again.

Nor does Mr. Weintraub restrict himself to the Asian theaters of war. To give us perspective on the attack on Pearl Harbor, he ranges the world, giving us snapshots from the chancelleries of Berlin and London, from the

Long Day's Journey into War: December 7, 1941, by Stanley Weintraub (Dutton, 706 pp., $26.95)

Mr. Elegant is the author of Pacific Destiny: Inside Asia Today.

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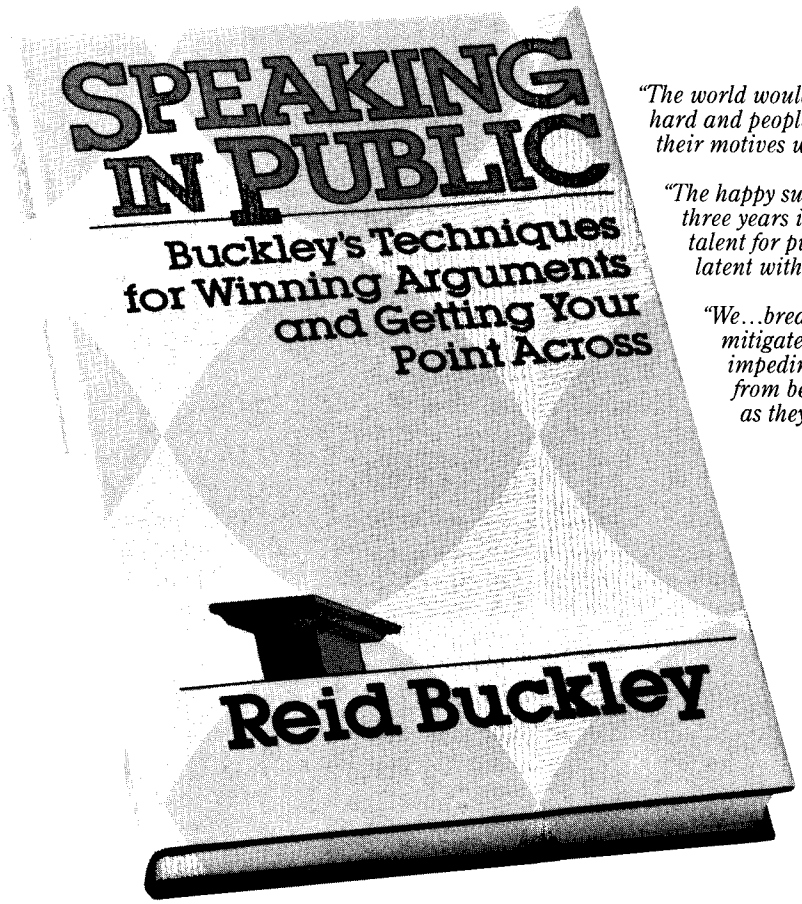

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icebound Russian front, and, of course, from Washington. He also provides glimpses of lesser players on both the warfront and the homefront. He gives us a feeling of the atmosphere, even down to incidental details such as Franklin Roosevelt putting the final touches on his speech to Congress, penciling in the phrase "a day that will live in infamy."

There are, it must be said, minor frayings and loose ends in this Bayeux Tapestry. For instance, a shotgun does not shoot bullets, it discharges "shot." St. John's Anglican Cathedral is not "just above the Royal Navy docks" in Hong Kong. The Cathay (now Peace) Hotel in Shanghai is not on the Bund. The American newspaperman prominent in Manila in the 1940s and, also, the 1950s was not Fred Wilkins, but Ford Wilkins. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was never called the Gissimo, but the Gimo, though his wife, Mei-ling Soong Chiang, was called the Missimo by the irreverent. But *Long Day's Journey into War* is far too impressive a work of popular history to be marred, except marginally, by these imprecisions.

I must here declare an interest. I met Stanley Weintraub when he was, with panache, imitating a lieutenant in the Medical Administrative Corps of the U.S. Army at the Prisoner of War Hospital in Pusan, Korea. He later sent me a copy of his slimmish volume called *The War in the Wards*, about the struggle between the U.S. Army's rough and ready Military Police colonels and their politically sophisticated prisoners. That was an engaging account of the first *mano a mano* engagement of the cold war on the psychological front. But I have never seen him again, hardly even thought of him until this heavyweight production thumped onto my desk.

Mr. Weintraub refrains from judgments, allowing the facts to shape his reader's response. He makes plain, for instance, the economic basis for the war in the Pacific, which Tokyo pointedly called *Daitoa Senso*, the Greater East Asia War. The Japanese were challenged because of their economic aggrandizement by military means. They went to war to attain specific goals that were primarily economic.

And indeed the U.S. is today faced with the same Japanese, who have learned a great deal while forgetting only that which it is advantageous to forget. Perhaps we may next expect from Stanley Weintraub a minute-by-minute account of the day the U.S. decided to let Japan build the silicon chip. *Long Day's Journey* demonstrates certain fundamental facts regarding that continuing struggle: Not the Japanese but the Americans were to blame for Pearl Harbor, as the Americans are to blame for their present embarrassment. For reasons of power, economics, and morality, which

RIGHT BOOKS

■ A veteran book reviewer was once asked whether he had read a certain book. No, he replied, "but I reviewed it." That reviewer was not John Chamberlain. Prolific as he was, he took time to read the books.

Turnabout Years (Jameson Books, 295 pp., $12.95), a collection of Chamberlain's essays written between 1950 and 1952, attests to that. His writing is not only erudite and comprehensive; it's always precise. "Here in a nutshell," writes Priscilla Buckley in her introduction, "is the intellectual story of America in the first half of this century"—a period that witnessed two world wars, a cold war, and the emergence of an ideology that attempted to end history itself. This collection captures only a few brilliant moments in the luminous life of the author, who, after *The Freeman*, went on to become a daily book reviewer for the *New York Times* and editor at *Forbes* and *Barron's*. He contributed greatly and generously as a Senior Editor at NATIONAL REVIEW.

There was perhaps no one shrewder at chronicling, for instance, the creeping Communist influence among New York intellectuals, and no one sharper in excoriating the disagreeable tendency of many in America to accept their views. These intellectuals, Chamberlain writes, "believe in the strangest things. . . . They still think that anti-Communism is not a local political issue (which means they have never listened to Polish-Americans on the subject of Yalta). . . . They still think that the way to redeem a man's character is to feed him without requiring any payment in work." Today's academics, journalists, and liberal politicians are yesterday's New York intellectuals.

Small-government proponents sympathize with Chamberlain's lament over the growing irrelevance of the Tenth Amendment—perhaps the most abused of the Bill of Rights. He reminded those who advocated "the notion that man's future can be planned collectively" about the Pilgrims, who were the first on these shores to enact such a notion. The result, as he puts it: "apathy—and actual starvation."

Turnabout Years, written forty years ago, is a refreshment in today's social dialogue, which usually concludes—in the name of fairness, of course—that we need to "soak the rich." If only Dan Rostenkowski or George Mitchell understood Chamberlain's dictum: "To defend others' millions is to protect my own hundreds!"

What comes through in his reviews is a sense for the American spirit, for a simple life of freedom. In a short review on gardening, a therapeutic love, Chamberlain argues against pulling weeds around tomato plants, for they provide shade during hot summer months and their roots act as "deep rivers," bringing minerals to the surface.

But he had given in to utopian dreams too, putting himself among the "lukewarm Whittaker Chamberses." "Not many of us have been spies, not many of us have ever joined the Communist Party . . . But that has not been because of our superior virtue," he says humbly. Many of his generation (including Chamberlain himself, briefly in the Twenties) succumbed to utopian thinking "in little, comfortable ways"—an implicit tribute to Chambers's denunciation of his own "high voltage" experience with Communism and powerful testimony to later becoming a living witness to his Christian faith.

Chamberlain's has not been a "high voltage" life, but his commentary on these hefty truths must have been quite shocking to his intellectual adversaries, who would crush attempts at crossing a certain ideological line. Mr. Chamberlain compiled *Turnabout Years* as a vindication of sorts. The book is welcome, though no vindication was necessary. —GEOFFREY MORRIS

Mr. Morris is NR's Executive Editor.

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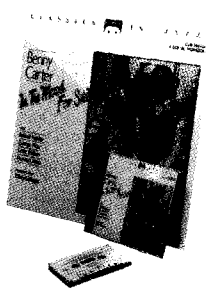

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appeared imperative, the U.S. decided in 1941 to block further Japanese expansion. Yet the United States, knowing the Japanese record of starting conflicts without warning, took no precautions.

As far as the Japanese are concerned, among the things that are fair in war is an unheralded attack. For reasons of power, economics, and national survival, which appeared imperative to them, the Japanese struck—and won a tremendous tactical victory, which they did not follow up. We can hardly call them immoral for following up today. □

FILM

Jangle Bells

JOHN SIMON

AS ALWAYS at Christmas, cinema bestows baubles of every description on us until we feel like a helpless conifer groaning under mass-produced gaudiness. But let me begin with a couple of earlier movies that I didn't get to before.

The Fisher King received generally warm notices, and is being touted as Oscar material. Let me say categorically that it is one of the most nonsensical, pretentious, mawkishly cloying movies I have ever had to retch through. An attempt by Richard LaGravanese to write a modern New York Holy Grail story (in which the Grail turns out to be a school trophy won by an eccentric nabob), it brings on Jeff Bridges as a contemporary knight errant—not quite Lancelot and certainly no Galahad; also Robin Williams as a combination Percevalesque holy fool and wounded Amfortas-like fisher king. Under Terry Gilliam's frenetic, Roger Rabbity direction, full of obnoxious artinesses, the film indulges Williams's unholy foolishness.

As a mighty peculiar waif, Amanda Plummer indulges her shuddery talent for being simultaneously eight and eighty, and thus a fittingly spooky love interest for Williams. But the film wastes the considerable knowhow of Jeff Bridges and Mercedes Ruehl, as his lover. He plays a ruthless disk jockey (straight out of Eric Bogosian's *Talk Radio*) who unintentionally but irresponsibly instigates a mass murder; she is the jolly proprietress of a seedy video store for whom he now works behind the counter and under the sheets. Any film that hinges on whether Bridges can cast off convention and spend a (platonic) night lying naked with Willams on a Central Park lawn as both gaze at the moon is, at best, wholly frail; at worst, a bitter chalice, dregs from the first sip.

■ Equally contemptible and even more pretentious is Peter Greenaway's latest, ***Prospero's Books***. John Gielgud has long been longing to leave behind a filmed record of one of his best stage roles, Prospero in *The Tempest*. But

Mr. Simon, NR's film critic, is also theater critic for New York *magazine.*

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better directors unfortunately turned down the project, which fell into the clutches of Greenaway, who promptly proceeded to improve Shakespeare into one of those muddled, arrogantly inscrutable Greenaway conundrums.

First, he invented 24 arcane books (one of them a "pornography") from which Prospero draws his magic, each book generating a "chapter" of the movie. Then he picked a motley international cast, some of whom have no notion of Shakespeare, and placed all the spoken dialogue into Gielgud's mouth. Above all, he used a combination of "film and video technologies," especially the digital, electronic Quantel Paintbox(?), to superimpose several actions in a ceaseless visual palimpsest (or, as he calls it, a "complex visual cascade"), to the utter bewilderment of non-stoned spectators. He further introduced such absurdities as four Ariels and a great deal of nudity, including that of Sir John, getting to show, as he put it, his ballocks at 87.

I could go on, but have neither the heart nor the stomach for it. Gielgud's noble voice, tremulous with age, can still send poetic shivers up and down your and my spines, but there are only shudders of horror to be had from Michael Nyman's accompanying music. It all depends on whether you can black out every sight, block out every sound that isn't Gielgud.

■ István Szabó was once an able Hungarian filmmaker, but, starting with *Mephisto*, he fell into the cinematic equivalent of grandiloquence that accelerated with *Colonel Redl*, and reaches an anticlimactic culmination in ***Meeting Venus***. Zoltán Szántó, a distinguished Hungarian conductor, is invited to conduct *Tannhäuser* for Opera Europa, a fictitious international opera company in Paris, to be simultaneously staged and telecast. Artists and management come from all over Europe and the United States. The event runs into every kind of difficulty: labor-union trouble, internecine ethnic and political antipathies, a tempestuous love affair between the married Szántó and the temperamental Swedish diva Karin Anderson.

The film attempts several things: an allegory of European factiousness; a satirical commentary on labor–management clashes (with overtones of the Communist–capitalist conflict); a tragicomic compendium of the prob-

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lems besetting an idealistic genius who wants merely to create art when confronted with the squabbles of petty reality; a send-up of the television as well as the opera world; a torrid love story. On the last score, it fails catastrophically; on the others, it is intermittently funny, but far more often laughable.

Note first a typical sophomoric in-joke: the name of the director and principal scenarist, István Szabó, translates into English as Stephen Tailor. Hence the American tenor is called Stephen Taylor, with the other principals' names similarly translations of the name into other languages: Stefano del Sarto, Etienne Tailleur, Herr von Schneider, Maria Krawiecki. Note also the closeness in sound between Zoltán Szántó and István Szabó. An almost equally unfelicitous joke from almost every point of view except, perhaps, that of the box office is the casting of Glenn Close as Karin Anderson. A supposed Swedish nightingale, she is a cross between an ineptly pseudo-Swedish shrike and a genuine American turkey.

Made mostly in Budapest, except for a few brief sequences in Paris, with the lovely Budapest Opera effectively doubling as the Palais Garnier (the former Paris Opéra), *Meeting Venus* displays a trendy international cast in most of the featured roles, and Hungarians in the rest. Many of the former look poor here: Johanna Ter Steege (excellent in *The Vanishing*), Maria de Medeiros (equally poor in *Henry and June*), and Erland Josephson (the once serious Swedish actor who has turned into a modish cliché). But there is good work from Jay O. Sanders as an American *Heldentenor*, from the Pole Marian Labuda as a German *Heldentenor*, and by two fine Hungarian actresses, Dorottya Udavaros and Ildikó Bánsági, as the hero's ex-mistress and current wife, respectively. The hero himself is played by Niels Arestrup, a French actor of Danish descent, who is good—perhaps too good—at looking harried and tormented. And then there is Glenn Close, every American high-school girl's notion of a Scandinavian opera star.

Most of the clever lines are asides in Hungarian, poorly subtitled. But the singers who dub the actors are very well chosen: Kiri Te Kanawa, Waltraud Meier, René Kollo, and Håkan Hågegård at the forefront. If you want filmed, but not staged, excerpts from *Tannhäuser*, you couldn't do much better. Disappointingly, though, the great cinematographer Lajos Koltai is not allowed to shine here.

■ One of the joys of my formative years was the cartoons of Charles Addams in *The New Yorker*. I herewith confess even to an unholy passion for their raven-tressed, frazzled-hemlined vampyrical heroine. So I had no desire to see *The Addams Family*, which, on television, I had no problem avoiding. But ***The Addams Family*** is now on film and, as a film critic, I'm trapped.

Even though some good actors (among whom I seldom include Raul Julia, and Anjelica Huston almost never) are similarly trapped in this movie; anyone older than ten and without a gun pointed at his temple should avoid it like the plague. (Don't expect me to come up with a novel simile for this offal.) The director, Barry Sonnenfeld, formerly cinematographer for the ghastly Coen brothers, was good at his old trade, but is not good enough at his new one to make anything out of this labored, trashy script, which, aside from a few amusing one-liners, has only one thing going for it: the performance of Christina Ricci as the ghoulish little Addams daughter, (definitely not any) Wednesday. But we'll have to wait for some other day and screenplay to assess her full talents.

■ Bette Midler is, to put it mildly, not ideally suited for a heroic role. As a USO entertainer in ***For the Boys***, she and her song-and-danceman-*cum*-comedian partner, played stolidly by James Caan, perform for the troops through three wars. The London blitz in World War II serves to establish how beloved Dixie Leonard (Miss Midler) is by the troops, much more so than the initially more famous Eddie Sparks (Caan). The Korean War serves as an excuse to give the otherwise always sparring rather than love-making couple a one-night stand with each other, and also to show how McCarthyism in show business (ineptly shoe-horned into a scene that takes place in Tokyo) brings out the nobility and heroism in Dixie and the craven complacency in Eddie. The Vietnam War is an excuse to convey how dated

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Eddie's mediocre talent has become, and how inviolate Dixie's superior one remains even under drastically altered wartime circumstances. It also affords Miss Midler a chance to display her

Alan Nahigian

sublime dramatics as her estranged son—who had left her to live with Eddie and is now the commanding officer of the installation where Eddie's troupe performs as the enemy attacks—dies in her arms, love, forgiveness, and grief commingling in that final embrace.

In an equally grand conclusion, Eddie and Dixie, now ancient and (in his case) doddering, are to be given the Presidential Medal of Honor during a televised variety show in a theater (the Kennedy Center, presumably, though that is hardly the way the medal is presented). Before going on, they fight once again, but eventually Dixie joins Eddie on stage and they go through their routines one last, glorious time. Need I tell you that the script—by Marshall Brickman, Neal Jimenez, and Lindy Laub (which sounds ominously like a *nom de plume* for Cindy Lauper)—begs, borrows, and steals from any number of show-biz stories? What I should tell you, though, is how much more flat-footed, vulgar, and mirthless *For the Boys* is than any of the sources it has pillaged.

The big hole at the film's center, however, is Miss Midler herself. Her character is modeled on the real-life Martha Raye, but Miss Raye was not a top banana in the Bob Hope USO show, or even the top thrush (Frances Langford was). Miss Midler owes her start to a very different audience from our GIs in various wars: the homosexual clientele at the public baths. Dixie anachoristically and anachronistically duplicates the real-life Bette, and would have gone over with our servicemen like an exhibition of eurythmics by the Dalcroze Institute. □

DELECTATIONS

The Mystery as Novel of Manners

LINDA BRIDGES

NOT UNTIL 1969 did the *New York Times* Sunday Book Review choose a mystery novel (Ross Macdonald's *The Goodbye Look*) as the subject of its lead review. That review—or rather the fact of its having been commissioned—was greeted by a good deal of sniffing from beneath elevated brows. Mysteries, we were informed, cannot be dignified with the name "novel." They are throwaways meant to be read once only, and not susceptible of serious criticism. Yes, of course, serious people have admitted to reading them, but they are at best a sort of exercycle for the mind, slightly inferior to crossword puzzles; more usually they are simply vehicles for escapism. . . .

It's true enough that not everything on the mystery shelves is a novel. Leaving aside police procedurals, thrillers, and various other sub- and related genres, many actual whodunits are pure puzzle, designed to take people's minds off their own concerns. But the true mystery novel is intended to put the reader's mind *onto* something else—considerations of good and evil, human weakness and temptation, the fallenness of man. And while aficionados of the pure puzzle—early Ellery Queen, say—become impatient with mysteries in which, as they put it, the scenery and characters get in the way of the plot, there is still plenty of scope in the genre for humor and

Miss Bridges, NR's Managing Editor, is the co-author, with William F. Rickenbacker, of the forthcoming The Art of Persuasion: A National Review Rhetoric for Writers.

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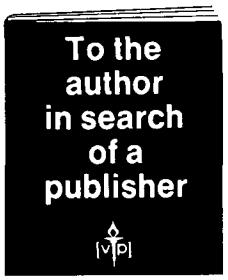

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drama, social comment and exotic scenery, character studies and literary flights. The mystery is today's novel of manners, and its morality novel as well. Had Charles Dickens been born in the later days of Queen Victoria rather than of George III, his London might have resembled Margery Allingham's or John Dickson Carr's; Anthony Trollope might have filled his stately homes and country rectories with corpses and rumors of corpses, like Dorothy L. Sayers and Agatha Christie. And a twentieth-century Nathaniel Hawthorne might have created a detective as brooding as P. D. James's Adam Dalgliesh.

In many mysteries the victim is a sympathetic character, and when the murderer is finally found out and brought to book, our only emotion, apart from intellectual relief or surprise, is a sense that justice has been done. Other novelists try us higher; they make the victim someone we are tempted to say richly deserved it, and the murderer someone we like or at least pity. In the best of these novels the sorrow reaches a Virgilian level of *lacrimae rerum*. John Dickson Carr seldom does this; Nicholas Blake makes it almost a trademark. (More than that I mustn't say: even though it is my contention that there's much more to mystery novels than the plot, still there is, as an English professor of mine put it, a certain virginity you lose the first time you read the denouement of any novel, and the critic should not presume to lose it on behalf of his readers.)

Be that as it may, up to the point where the detective pins down his quarry, there are scenes to be set—and sometimes axes to be ground. While Patricia Moyes is delightful on subjects like one's first ski lesson, when she turns to racial prejudice or the privileged classes she can let satire fall over into caricature. Nonetheless, social comment is a fruitful field. In his days as a jockey, Dick Francis rode for, among others, the Queen Mother, and many of his characters have a view of the upper classes untinged with either envy or snobbery. In *Trial Run* the Prince (a cousin of the Queen) calls over his gardener:

> "What do we do about all this, Bob?" he said.
>
> The gardener was knowledgeable about tow trucks and suitable garages, and said he would fix it. His manner with the Prince was comfortable and spoke of long-term mutual respect, which would have irritated the anti-royalists no end.
>
> "Don't know what I'd do without Bob," confirmed the Prince as we walked back toward the house. "If I ring up shops or garages and say who I am, they either don't believe it and say yes, they're the Queen of Sheba, or else they're so fussed they don't listen properly and get everything wrong. Bob will get those cars shifted without any trouble, but if I tried to arrange it myself, the first people to arrive would be the reporters."

Lew Archer's beat, in the Ross Macdonald novels, is the social topography of Southern California. "The town," he says in *The Way Some People Die*,

> rose from sea level in a gentle slope, divided neatly into social tiers, like something a sociologist had built to prove a theory. Tourists and transients lived in hotels and motels along the waterfront. Behind them a belt of slums lay ten blocks deep, where the darker half of the population lived and died. On the other side of the tracks—the tracks were there—the business section wore its old Spanish façades like icing on a stale cake. The people who worked in the stores and offices inhabited the grid of fifty-foot lots that covered the next ten blocks. On the slopes above them the owners and managers enjoyed their patios and barbecue pits. And along the top of the ridge lived the really wealthy, who had bought their *pieds-à-terre* in Pacific Point because it reminded them of Juan-les-Pins.

Dorothy Sayers—who put in her time as an advertising copywriter—has Lord Peter Wimsey wonder,

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(Continues on page 68)

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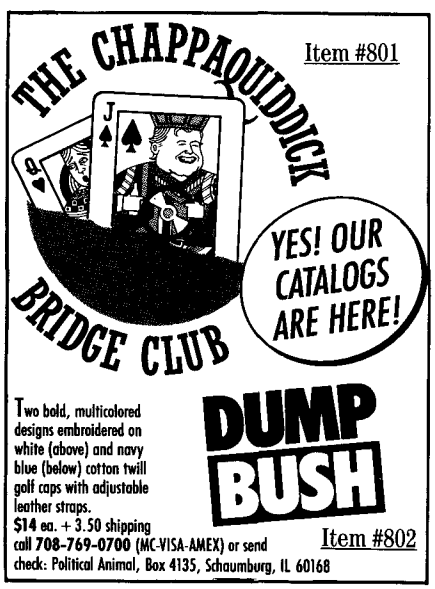
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BRIDGES

(Continued from page 66)

nied them, could be bullied or wheedled into spending their few hardly won shillings on whatever might give them, if only for a moment, a leisured and luxurious illusion.

As in Dickens or Trollope, social comment often has political implications. Dickens's *Jarndyce* v. *Jarndyce* is more resonant than any newspaper editorial on courtroom delay, as we meet the people whose substance is wasted unto the third generation. Here is an Erle Stanley Gardner character on a later court's unreliability (written, by the way, in 1942—before Earl Warren, but after FDR's Court-packing scheme):

> "You can't tell what the Supreme Court is going to do."
>
> "Don't they follow regular rules?"
>
> I said, "They used to be bound by precedents. On those matters, we knew what the law was. Now they're changing those old decisions. That throws the whole list out, because you can't tell which ones they'll change and which ones they'll let stand."
>
> "Isn't that dangerous?"
>
> "It may be good, or it may be bad. It's a condition. We've had a shakeup in the law. Eventually these new judges will get the law changed around to suit *their* ideas. Then lawyers will know pretty generally how to advise clients. In the meantime there's a lot of guessing."

Nicholas Blake had some standing to write about poets and poetry: in his other life he was C. Day Lewis, and his detective, Nigel Strangeways, is recognizably modeled on W. H. Auden (even as John Dickson Carr's Gideon Fell is modeled on G. K. Chesterton). In *Head of a Traveler* he has a poet, whose house is covered with roses—"Drifts and swirls and swags of them. A cataleptic trance of white and yellow roses"—enlarge on the Sleeping Beauty theme:

> "The Sleeping Beauty. Yes," he said musingly. "And the thicket of thorns. Yes. But have you thought . . . have you thought what really kept her there? Not the thorns, but the roses. She was the prisoner of her own beauty, of her parents' determination that she should be invulnerable and never allowed to meet her fate. The Queen took away all the spinning wheels, you remember. Yes, it was all the Queen's fault. I don't believe in that Wicked Fairy. The poor girl had nothing to do but moon about and admire her own reflection in the roses. So presently she went to sleep out of sheer boredom."

By convention, a mystery can't be a "comic novel." But that is no bar to comedy in it. In *Against the Grain* Emma Lathen offers a tall tale about Plomsky's Otter Ensemble and a Sol Hurok–like impresario named Abe Baranoff:

> These otters were no ordinary otters, if various respectful but guarded press reports could be believed. . . . These otters could sing "The Volga Boatman," dance a rousing mazurka, and assemble a three-stage rocket. . . .
>
> "For fish?" suggested somebody from the *Times* . . .
>
> "Fish?" replied Baranoff. . . . "Fish for artists like this? Would we give fish to Callas? To Rubinstein? To Horowitz?" He brandished a Malacca walking stick. "Tell them, maestro."
>
> He inclined his majestic head as Plomsky commenced a detailed description of the sugar pellets used to coax prodigies of effort from his protégés.
>
> "Soaked in champagne," added Baranoff grandly. He cared more for the spirit than the technique of the performing arts.
>
> Pained, Plomsky protested. "But no! Not champagne. Sometimes when they are tired, a little vodka, yes! But champagne—no." . . .
>
> "In America [Baranoff declared], Plomsky's otters will swim in champagne!"

But when all the scenes have been set, the characters established, and the jokes enjoyed, a murder mystery is, finally, about murder. And on the subject of murder the true mystery (as opposed to the suspense novel or thriller) has a solid and unashamed morality. Hercule Poirot confronts the question in *Death on the Nile*:

> "Mademoiselle, do not open your heart to evil. . . . Because—if you do—evil will come. Yes, very surely evil will come. It will enter in and make its home within you, and after a little while it will no longer be possible to drive it out." . . .
>
> "I suppose you believe it's very wrong to kill a person who has injured you—even if they've taken away everything you had in the world?"
>
> Poirot said steadily: "Yes, Mademoiselle. I believe it is the unforgivable offense—to kill."

Others disagree about the possibility of forgiveness—Ellis Peters's Brother Cadfael and G. K. Chesterton's Father Brown each connive at the escape of murderers they judge to be truly repentant—but not about the gravity of the offense. Murder was a sin before it was a crime—"arrogating," as Leo Bruce's detective Carolus Deene put it, "the power of God" to take a life. The murderer's soul, no less than the victim's life and the community's peace, are the concern of the mystery novelist. □

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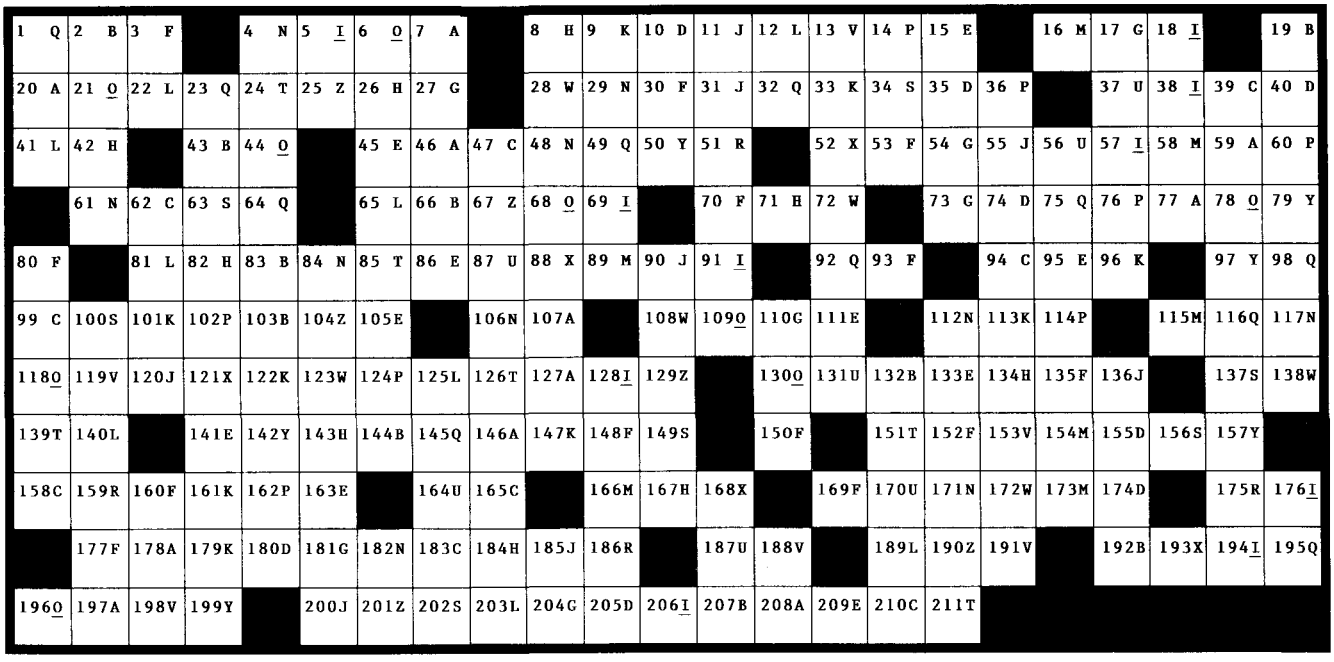
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. Homebuilder's progressive advancement — 146 178 208 127 77 107 46 197 20 7 / 59

B. Okays — 144 132 66 2 43 83 207 103 192 19

C. Amenhotep IV's queen — 94 47 165 99 158 183 62 210 39

D. Marine base in Virginia — 40 180 74 35 174 10 205 155

E. Topsy-turvy cake variety — 86 111 45 209 141 15 105 95 163 133

F. Yearly celebrations — 150 148 53 135 160 152 177 93 70 30 / 169 3 80

G. Showing no signs of age — 27 110 156 54 17 73 204 181

H. Midday break — 26 82 71 134 167 8 184 143 42

I. Without strain — 57 176 69 194 5 206 38 18 128 91

J. South Carolina's state tree — 200 11 136 31 55 120 90 185

K. Conservative, to the TV anchorman — 9 147 101 113 122 96 161 33 179

L. Those who watch the news-watchers — 189 140 81 41 203 65 22 125 12

M. Stratagems — 166 89 115 16 154 173 58

N. Caring — 84 117 171 182 112 61 29 106 4 48

O. Breakfast's eye-opening vessel (2 words) — 130 196 44 68 78 21 118 6 109

P. Broadcast, in a tubal sort of way — 36 162 14 114 124 102 60 76

Q. Leaning, physical or metaphorical — 49 145 75 64 92 195 32 1 23 116 / 98

R. Merry time of year — 186 175 159 51

S. Seen on the greens — 149 202 63 137 34 100

T. Pesters — 85 126 24 139 211 151

U. Bookbinder's favorite country? — 170 187 56 164 87 37 131

V. Straying — 119 153 191 198 188 13

W. Whitewater, sometimes Grand in Michigan — 138 172 28 123 72 108

X. More slippery in winter — 121 193 52 168 88

Y. Ends — 199 97 50 157 142 79

Z. Debates — 67 201 25 190 104 129

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition. **See page 67 for solution to last Trans-O-Gram.**

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Setting an Example

MONTREAL, DECEMBER 2

The relevance of a distinct, concrete question can overcome the boredom of repeating it, day after day. Cato never tired of asking the same question and instantly giving the answer to it: Carthage had to be destroyed, or else Rome was not safe. The late Congressman Robert Rich of Pennsylvania is remembered in the legislative stacks for the single question he inevitably asked whenever a bill was passed by his colleagues: "Where are you going to get the money?" I am increasingly drawn to the question, "What are we going to do about illegitimacy?" I fret over that question for several reasons. The first and most obvious is that illegitimate births have increased more drastically even than crime and illiteracy. Among blacks the rise over the past twenty years is from 37.6 to 63 per cent. Among whites, from 5.7 to 18 per cent.

So?

There are several reasons why illegitimate births are undesirable. The one with the widest appeal is that illegitimate children tend to grow up in poverty. A child raised by a single parent is 500 per cent likelier to be poor than his neighbor with two parents. And a child growing up in poverty is in turn likelier to turn to criminal pursuits. Another reason? Well, they come in at you from all sides. . . . We worry about the population explosion. And the place to begin, on that score, is to curb accidental babies. Still another reason? Illegitimate babies suggest loose sexual habits and these in turn imply an increase in venereal disease, in the spread of AIDS, and in children born diseased.

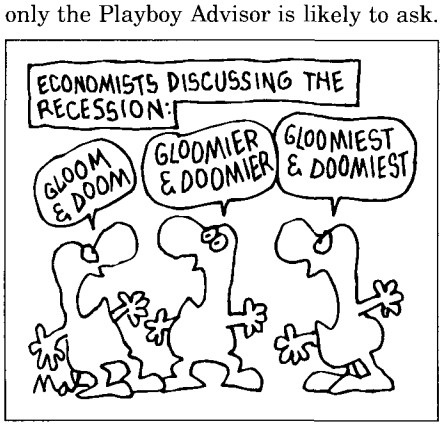
More? One needs almost to whisper the point in our blasé age. Loose sex is wrong. It is . . . anti-moral. It is forbidden by most religions, with special emphasis on adulterous sex. It is one thing for society to acknowledge that temptations will, with varying frequency, overwhelm human beings, because we are all sinners. It is something else to say that it doesn't matter whether Joe gets drunk every night, as opposed to every St. Patrick's Day. Civilization is about curbing appetites, which appetites include the occasional desire to murder your neighbor and to draw and quarter your congressman.

I am in Montreal, and am asked casually did I know that Pierre Trudeau has just had a bastard child? (No, I didn't know.) And he is 72 years old! (Not a big deal: most men are potent well beyond that age.) And isn't it exciting! A little girl! (My escort gives her name.)

The mind flashes back to the beginning of the week, which was when the City of New York began dispensing condoms, free, to New York schoolchildren. The mind returns to Pierre Trudeau.

He was, of course, Prime Minister of Canada for almost forever. He is a lawyer and a man of great learning (to a personal friend, as a schoolboy in a Canadian camp, senior counselor Trudeau would recite at bedtime great hunks of Baudelaire in French). If you were omnipotent and he stood before you, you could say to him, "Pierre, disappear in that big library there at McGill and come out a month from now with the manuscript of a book on safe sex." That's all: the manuscript would be there, publishable; probably a best-seller.

So Pierre Trudeau, age 72, doesn't know what we are now expecting New York 17-year-olds to learn—how to prevent accidental births. Either that or he cared not to prevent an accidental birth: too much bother. Or perhaps he thought that one more Trudeau in Canada, whatever her last name, would enrich the Canadian patrimony. We don't know, and only the Playboy Advisor is likely to ask.



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We know only that this passerby experienced from the half-dozen people he asked about it not one scintilla of indignation—yes, the right word—over what Pierre Trudeau did.

If the only anticipatable reaction in the capital of Catholic Canada to its most prominent senior citizen's begetting a child out of wedlock is something on the order of prideful amusement, then it becomes clearer why the most formidable engine for continence isn't working. It is hard to remind ourselves of it, but most human beings do or do not do things because it is right or not right to do such things. To corrupt the moral architecture that proscribes sexual wantonness is to turn one's back not only on moral dicta, but on empirical superstructures. So now we put our bets on teaching callow 17-year-olds what a 72-year-old ultra-cosmopolitan hasn't been able to learn. We are left only with the single certainty, that before he finally leaves us, Mr. Trudeau will deliver at least one more speech on our obligation to the dispossessed. □

Civil War In Canada?

MONTREAL, DECEMBER 4

Somebody, somewhere, said that the trouble with the Canadians is that they are too dull, and that is the question—Are we dull?—that most frequently gets asked of itinerant American journalists. The recommended answer is the truthful answer, namely that Canada, historically, has been gratifyingly free of titanic social and political problems. After all, she shares the Northern Hemisphere with a neighbor that fought a revolution to achieve independence and after that a civil war; and the nations immediately south of that one have very nearly as many revolutions as they do feast days. For such reasons, Nicaragua and El Salvador and Cuba get much more attention in our press than Canada—or, for that matter Switzerland. The point of this is that dull countries tend to be virtuous countries.

What is around the corner for Canada is under the circumstances especially challenging. It is not as simple as: Will Quebec vote to become an independent country? The plebiscite is scheduled for 1992, before October. If the vote is affirmative, as is expected, it won't be as neat as such a vote made by Ukrainians, or Poles—or even Croats. Because what we know of as Quebec is an amalgama-

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tion of lands and peoples done in bits and pieces over the course of more than two hundred years. It wasn't until 1927 that Quebec assumed its present shape on the map, and that was done under the authority of the Privy Council of the British House of Lords, which is the tribunal to which Canada, up until 1952, used to take its most vexing problems.

Why can't the Canadian Supreme Court simply step in where the Privy Council once held sway? The answer is that there are aboriginal settlements within the territory of Quebec which assert that the decision of the Privy Council was based on the understanding that "Quebec" as designed would be a part of Canada. So that a separated Quebec undoes all the legal and historical thinking that went into the creation of the present Quebec. Add to this that one of the largest industrial firms in the world, Hydro-Quebec, is preparing to flood a huge section of the province in order to make a monstrous dam the purpose of which is to sell clean electrical power to New York State and to Vermont. That project is imperiled by several factors, the first of them that New York State doesn't forecast a need for as much extra power as it once did. A second factor is that the environmentalist lobbies have found themselves a new project and are up in arms at the thought of all the caribou who would need to go elsewhere, to say nothing, of course, of the Cree Indians.

Now there are people who are actually talking about civil war. The designated spokesman of the Parti Québecois said on Monday that he found it "difficult to believe that there is a majority of English Canadians who would follow the direction of civil war or military intervention." But tempers are rising. The editor of the *Financial Post*, Diane Francis, uses very direct language in discussing the activities of such as Jacques Parizeau, a leading Quebec separatist. "Canadians are mighty sick and tired of treasonous remarks by him," she writes. And then she, and others, start enumerating all the things that would happen to Quebec if it voted for independence. In a word, "the federal lights would be turned out." All federal activities in Quebec would stop, including transfer payments, subsidies, and services. "Parizeau and his band of highwaymen would be deposed and arrested."

There is certainly nothing dull about language at that pitch, is there? But the problem lies in the lack of a Constitutional Assembly designed to come up with procedures satisfactory to all parties. In fact, there is no such thing as a procedure satisfactory to all parties. The Québecois nationalists want to move their province lock, stock, and barrel out of Canada. But their province includes aboriginals and Englishmen and corporations and others who put down roots in Quebec on the assumption that it was an irremovable part of one country. Another way to put it is this: Do the voter who lives in Vancouver and the voter who lives in Halifax have a right to opine on whether Quebec should be a separate country? Only a dullard believes the answer to that question is obvious. □

Pearl Harbor Hangovers

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 9

Concerning the reflections we were all called upon to engage in on Pearl Harbor's fiftieth, herein my own:

1. It wasn't, really, a day that will live in infamy. Several of the same docudramas that highlighted that heavy phrase also gave us a still picture of President Roosevelt and aide Harry Hopkins. It was a picture taken on November 26, and Hopkins's diary records that on that day, FDR had said to him: "This means war." "This" was the reaction by the Japanese to a) our ultimatum, and b) our embargo of oil and scrap iron. It was this simple: The Japanese were not ready to renounce imperialism. After a ten-year bloody struggle they had conquered Manchuria and much else of China and were ready to spring against Indochina and the East Indies. The United States had said: Give it all up, every bit of it, and go home: or—our embargo will continue. The Japanese could not survive, let alone expand, without the raw materials we were now withholding from them.

2. So the attack on Pearl Harbor was infamous only if one is prepared to classify all surprise attacks as infamous, and this we aren't really prepared to do, are we? Was the Trojan horse an act of infamy? Or the Entebbe raid? Or, for that matter, the Normandy landing? To say nothing of Hiroshima. The Japanese pulled off a brilliant military maneuver. If one wishes to go to primary causes, we can argue that the Japanese were not entitled to wage war against China and that therefore the United States was correct in putting obstacles in Japan's way. But the heavy breathing over that one reminds us of the difficulties in identifying the Original Propulsive Act. Most historians are agreed that Versailles had a great deal to do with bringing on World War II, but then German imperialism had a lot to do with bringing on Versailles; and so on, until the memory reels.

3. We are, then, left with only the obligation to honor the dead at Pearl Harbor, and to be grateful that the Japanese air force didn't come back for another round. Had it done so, it would have put an end to the regenerative capacity of Pearl Harbor, which had all but the wretched *Arizona* back in operation within a few months. Admiral Yamamoto, who programmed the Pearl Harbor attack, never said it would bring victory for Japan. The most he could hope for was the immobilization of the United States for as long as possible, with the possibility of a negotiated peace. President Bush was very careful to say just the right thing: that the past is past, and the future is what we need to think about, and that after Pearl Harbor, the United States having "crushed" the totalitarians, we proceeded to help our sometime enemies. We didn't, of course, crush the totalitarians. We crushed only the Nazis and the Japanese. The surviving totalitarians weren't our enemies, they were our friends. And there wasn't a day in the history of the Soviet Union that its government didn't slaughter more human beings than the Japanese killed the day of Pearl Harbor.

4. So then what about the future? Most of the commentators spoke of a new hostility that is being fed by the Japanese commercial edge over us.

Now that is a hostility that is indeed worth reflecting upon. And the problem we have in getting mad at the Japanese is that they are putting into practice those qualities that have marked American success since the Industrial Revolution. When asked, What is it about America that accounts for its success? what is the well-schooled schoolboy supposed to answer?

—Americans work hard, they save their money and invest it, they learn the arts of manufacturing and of merchandising, and before your eyes, in a single lifespan, you see things like the Ford Motor Company, Boeing, CBS, IBM, a $5-trillion economy, and a poverty level reduced to 13 per cent.

So: the Japanese take our lead, only they spend more time than we do on education and training, more on quality control and automation, and they save more; and in much less than one life span one sees such phenomena as Mitsubishi and Sony and Toshiba. Why should that anger us? Anger ought to be different from self-reproach. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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I Feel, Therefore I Am

I DON'T make New Year's resolutions but I do make lists, e.g., People I'd Shoot If They Weren't Already Dead.

Seeing how much of our social degeneration can be traced back to Jean-Jacques Rousseau is like seeing how many words can be formed from *antidisestablishmentarianism*. In both cases the answer is: a lot.

Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* praised "natural man" over his civilized counterpart, who, Rousseau believed, had been ruined by knowledge, culture, luxury, and "insincere" polished manners. Civilization, said Rousseau, really ought to be torn down and all laws abolished so that everybody could be happy like the simple peasants who placed heart over head, emotion over logic, nature over culture, soul over all.

He sent a copy to Voltaire, who replied: "I have received, sir, your new book against the human species, and I thank you for it. No one has ever been so witty as you are in trying to turn us into brutes; to read your book makes one long to go on all fours. As, however, it is now some sixty years since I gave up the practice, I feel that it is unfortunately impossible for me to resume it."

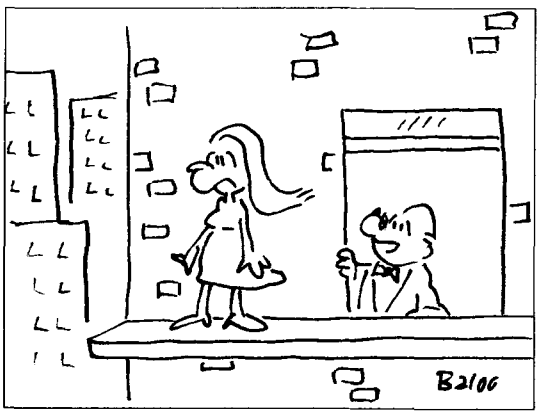
Ensconced as the man of the hour by bored French arisocrats who considered him the last word in radical chic, Rousseau turned out a plethora of how-to and self-help treatises on subjects ranging from music to hiking to breastfeeding, writing and talking so much about primitive scenes, mother's milk, and peasant warmth that breastfeeding became a national fad, even among women of the nobility who had always used wetnurses.

He had fathered five illegitimate children by a scullery maid, but, having gained entrée into Parisian society, he did not want to advertise this plebeian connection, so he dumped all five little ads in a foundling home and then wrote a book on how to raise children. *Emile*, as it was called, laid out a program of "natural" behavior over rigid discipline and "freedom" from stifling rules.

Rousseau's philosophy can be summed up by the buzzword of his day: *sensibilité*—what our age calls "getting in touch with your feelings." His methodology consisted of crying in the woods. Nature was particularly well-suited to his overwrought vocabulary. The woods were *wild*, *untamed*, *primitive*, *lush*. The woods were full of *nooks*, *copses*, *verdant canopies*, *umbrageous illusions*. They were also full of sobbing Rousseau fans but never mind that, you could be *alone with nature* in the woods, *lose yourself* in their beauty, *let it wash over you*, sleep *naked* in a *bower* and *become as one* with nature's *torrents*. Afterward, you could write about your sylvan crying jag and claim to be *drunk with emotion*, a cliché that is with us still.

His novel, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, equates sincerity with manic depression ("I love you as one must love, with excess, madness, rapture, and despair"). His friend Diderot, one of the so-called Enlightenment philosophers, also endorsed coming apart: "Move me, astonish me, unnerve me, make me tremble, weep, shudder, and rage."

If Rousseau's war on rationalism did not actually cause the French Revolution, it certainly set the tone. The neoclassicist Blaise Pascal had penned the famous line, "The heart has its reasons of which reason knows nothing," but he said it and got out, leaving posterity an exquisitely balanced epigram. Rousseau said it and kept on saying it over and over in purple prose until his followers were as conditioned as Pavlov's dogs. His message of *I feel, therefore I am* ushered in a self-indulgent primitivism that spilled over into political anarchy and gave the Jacobins an excuse for the Reign of Terror.



"Come back inside, Mrs. Osgood, we can take another *passport photo!"*

ROUSSEAU destroyed forever man's pride in self-mastery. His glorification of "natural" behavior foretold the Freudian theory of repression, the hippie credos of "Let it all hang out" and "If it feels good, do it," and the coarse sexual honesty called "getting down and dirty."

The self-realization and human-potential movements that have shredded our social fabric in the name of "feeling good about myself" are outgrowths of the oxymoronic mass individualism that Rousseau promoted in his *Confessions*, which contains the Western world's first mantra: "I am not made like anyone I have seen; I dare believe that I am not made like anyone in existence. If I am not better, at least I am different."

"A special type of sincerity," wrote Irving Babbitt, "is itself an outcome of the Rousseauistic movement. It seems to be assumed in certain quarters that almost any opinion is justified provided it be held with sufficient emotional vehemence."

The politicized nervous breakdown is a standard feature of Greenpeace junk mail. "Listening to five hundred dolphins shrieking in panic as they fight and gasp for air . . . standing by helplessly as living dolphins were dragged aloft thrashing and flailing in terror" sounds just like the heroine of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* in full throttle.

Crying in the woods is back, too. The New Man sobs over his tom-tom; female love addicts let it wash over them in that indoor version of the verdant canopy, the confessional talk show. The cheapness and utter lack of class that ooze out of Oprah, Donahue, and Geraldo are the recycled *sensibilité* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who dumped human dignity in a foundling home. —FLORENCE KING

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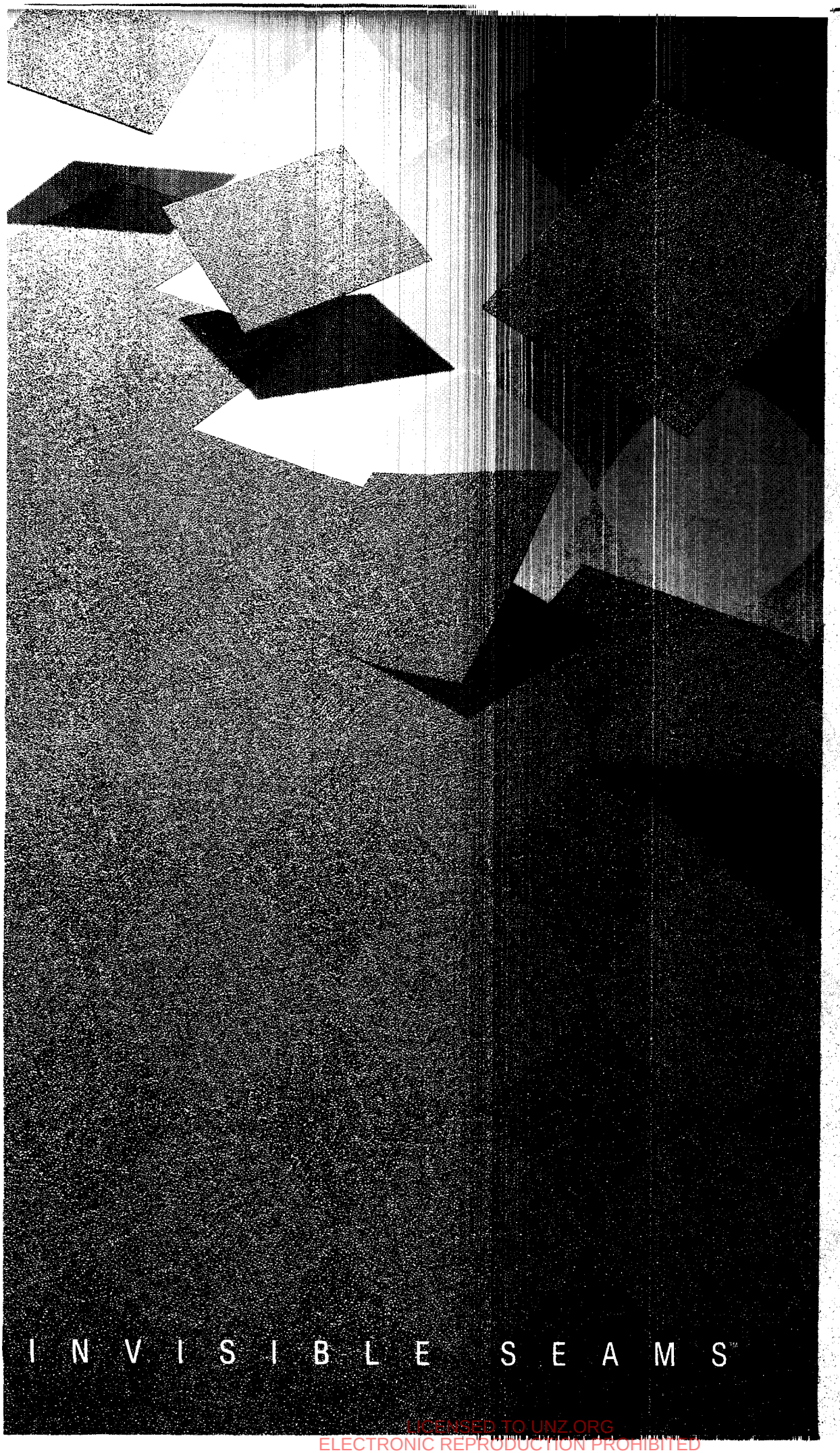

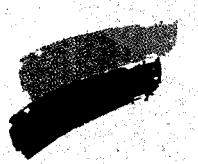

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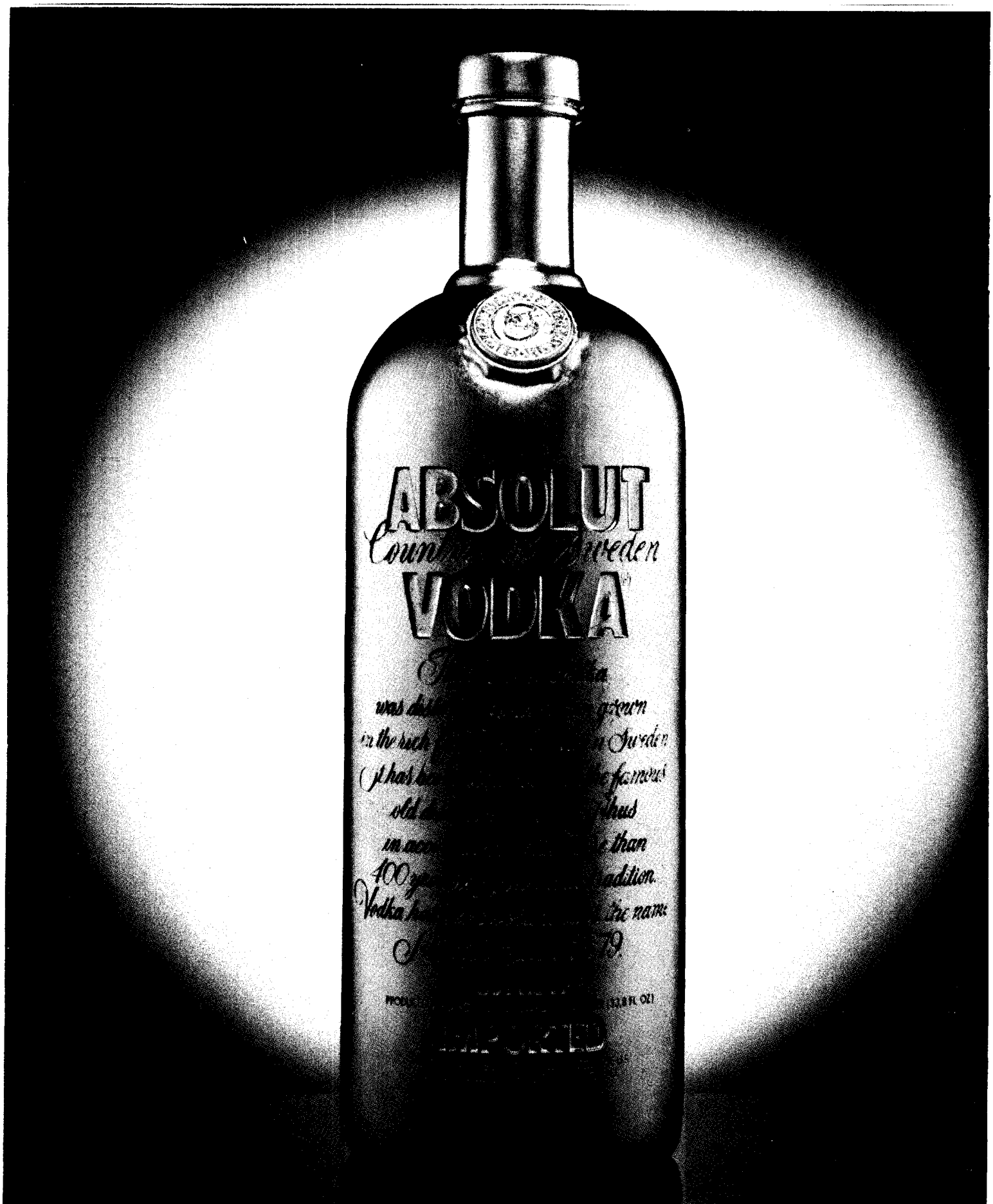

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